

THE NEW REPUBLIC

EYEWITNESS TO HELL

A survivor's diary of the
Serb concentration camp at Omarska

BY REZAK HUKANOVIĆ

HOW THE U.N. LET IT HAPPEN

The institution that saw no evil

BY DAVID RIEFF

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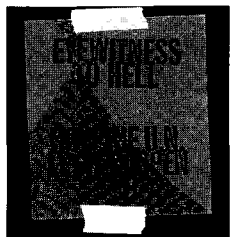
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CORRESPONDENCE

United colors

To the editors:

I agree with the general thrust of Jeffrey Rosen's "Southern Comfort" (January 8&15) on minority congressional districts drawn pursuant to the Voting Rights Act. I take issue with two points, however. First, creation of minority districts has not "contributed to massively polarized racial bloc voting." Such "massive" racial bloc voting was around long before the 1990 round of redistricting and is indeed the very evil that the creation of such districts is designed to remedy. That is why the law requires that plaintiffs statistically prove the existence of significant bloc voting *before* any minority districts need be drawn. If Rosen has actual evidence that such polarization has significantly increased as a result of post-1990 minority districts, he should say so.

More important, Rosen overstates the extent to which such minority districts contributed to recent GOP congressional gains. Allan Lichtman of American

University found no significant relationship between states with "Voting Rights Act" districts and states with Democratic losses in the 1994 elections. ("QUOTAS AREN'T THE ISSUE," *The New York Times*, December 10, 1994.) Democrats did just as poorly in 1994 in state and local elections unaffected by redistricting (such as gubernatorial races). Georgia, Rosen's prime example of the Voting Rights Act's culpability in recent GOP gains, experienced a significant statewide drop in Democratic candidate performance in the last election, even in areas unaffected by these minority districts.

Rosen should be given credit for recognizing the cynical assault on the Voting Rights Act by conservatives with political axes to grind. He aids that assault, however, when he uncritically accepts their attempt to make the Act the scapegoat for both continuing voter prejudices and the Democratic Party's own folly.

STEVEN MULROY
Alexandria, Virginia

To the editors:

The usual purpose of a column is to inform your readers if something is good or bad, or somewhere in between. After my third reading of "Southern Comfort" I'm still not sure if Jeffrey

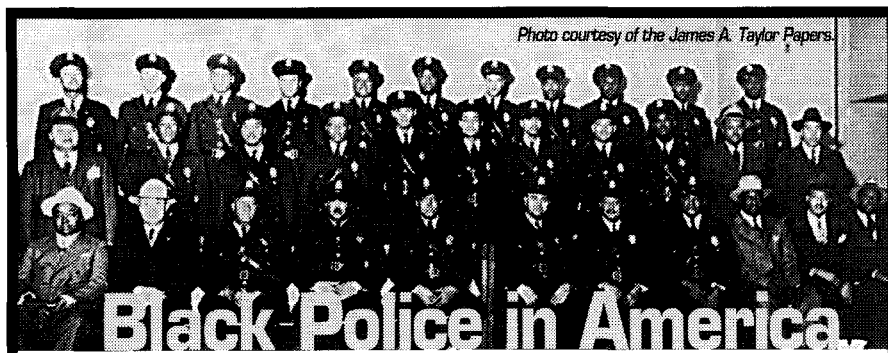
Rosen approves or disapproves of racial gerrymandering. In one breath, he seems to like it if the conservatives on the Supreme Court don't, and in the next breath, if the conservatives in Congress approve of it, he doesn't.

Rosen obviously has not gone to the trouble to read any of the briefs in either the Texas or North Carolina congressional redistricting cases that were argued at the Supreme Court last month. All of the parties in these cases have admitted that the creation of safe, single-race majority districts was the guiding principle behind the redistricting plans of Texas and North Carolina. The question the Court will answer in its forthcoming opinion is whether it is constitutional to use race to either protect or cause harm to incumbent officeholders.

In Texas, hundreds of middle-class and working-class racially integrated neighborhoods were resegregated for the purposes of constructing majority-minority congressional districts and, secondarily, to enhance the election prospects of incumbent politicians.

Does Rosen believe that this type of racial classification and voter harvesting is constitutional? Literacy tests, poll taxes and white primaries are effective at protecting incumbents also. They are, nonetheless, illegal.

EDWARD BLUM
Houston, Texas



Black Police in America

W. Marvin Dulaney

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Allergic reaction

To the editors:

Sally Satel and James Taranto's article, "Bogus Bee Pollen" (January 8&15), is three years too late to do allergy sufferers any good.

In July 1993, Iowa Senator Tom Harkin, the father of the Office of Alternative Medicine (OAM), told a packed subcommittee hearing that he cured all his allergies in two weeks by swallowing 250 bee pollen pills. With that announcement I expected the OAM to fund a full-blown clinical trial to identify the component in the bee pollen that was responsible for the miracle of healing that Harkin experienced.

A child's encyclopedia revealed that bee pollen contains 40 percent plant carbohydrate, 5 percent plant fat and 5 percent plant protein. The rest is fungus, insect body parts, bacteria, body hairs, mites and bee feces. BEE FECES! That rang a bell, for I recalled that OAM had just funded two research projects to study ancient Indian ayurvedic medicines that are made with goat feces. I thought, "Perhaps bee feces had healing power?"

I wrote Harkin and pointed out that positive results from research on the efficacy of bee s—t would allow him to sub-

stitute it for the bull s—t he was then feeding the public.

Needless to say, he never answered my letter, the OAM never did the research, and the allergy sufferers in our country are left to wonder why this miracle of healing was visited on Harkin and not on them.

SAUL GREEN

New York, New York

Brighton Beach memoirs

To the editors:

"Goy Story" in the January 8&15 issue has rendered me fuming and nearly speechless. Heretofore I've considered "revelation" to imply a special insight or message "from on high." "Goy Story" was a revelation from below—way below—the standards of intellectual and spiritual decency. The theme of the Jews for Jesus movement seems to be "Let us prey."

When immigrants to this country come out of the system of repression and persecution that existed in Russia under communism, the last thing they need is to be conned by meaningless religious jive. As a retired minister, I take personal offense, not only at the efforts depicted in "Goy Story," but at all efforts by all religious fundamentalists who insist that the rest of the world must come to believe what they believe or "suffer the consequences," which is usually the equivalent of eternal damnation.

What the Russian Jewish immigrants need are simply welcoming hands and assistance in becoming acclimated to the new, probably confusing, but eventually rewarding environment—with no price tag and no strings attached. And, of course, the guidance and counseling they receive must be completely free of efforts at religious conversion.

JOHN D. ICKES

Emmaus, Pennsylvania

To the editors:

As a Russian immigrant, I was quite amused by Amanda Onion's article "Goy Story." I know many people in Brighton Beach who came to this country recently and were contacted by Jews for Jesus missionaries. An overwhelming majority of immigrants do not have any religious feelings at all or keep those feelings to themselves. The only reason why they attend prayer meetings organized by Hope of Israel, as well as mainstream churches and synagogues, is that they get financial or material help from those institutions.

Most Russian immigrants speak poor English, have low-paying jobs or are unemployed. For many of them it takes years and years to get established in the U.S. During this initial period they fight

for survival and are not particularly interested in things spiritual. Arcane theological issues and divine revelations are the last of their concerns. Free lunch at the buffet, free English lessons, discounted furniture, clothes, etc. provided by the religious organizations are the real reasons why many Russian immigrants find their way to Bible classes. Frequently, the same person goes from a Bible class to a synagogue service during the same day and repeats the procedure the next day, each time faking deep interest in what they are being taught and laughing at "stupid Americans."

In short, there is no prospect of mass conversions one way or another. Most Russian immigrants will continue being non-religious. Amanda Onion can relax.

SAM BADERTINOV

New York, New York

BUMPER HOLIDAY DOUBLE ISSUE

THE
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It's Christmas:  Let's Means-test! *Matthew Miller* • *My*

Ron Silver Problem  And Ours *Michael Lewis* 

Beaming Up Scotty *Jacob Heilbrunn* • Bogus Bee Pollen and

You Sally Satel  Jews for Jesus  *Amanda Onion*

~ The Miss Ghana Contest *Liesel Schillinger* • A Cambodian

Saint Philip *Gowewitch*  Why **GEORGE** Sucks *Judith*

Shulevitz • Merry Kitschmas! *Jackson Leary* **AAAA**

A Vermeer Hamper  Appreciations from *Simon Schama*

~ Jed Per  A Nice Lesbian Girl *Norah Vincent* 



To the editors:

In "Goy Story" the statement in the third paragraph that Rabbi Tovia Singer is the director of "Jews for Judaism of Greater New York" is incorrect.

Rabbi Singer is not associated or affiliated with Jews for Judaism in any way. In fact, he has no right to utilize our federally trademarked name.

RABBI BENTZION KRAVITZ

*National Director, Jews for Judaism
Los Angeles, California*

Subsidy for rent

To the editors:

Matthew Miller refers to the federal mortgage interest deduction as a subsidy, reflecting the statist liberal view that government has a higher claim to income than individuals earning it. When the feds take my tax dollars and give them to others as welfare checks, sugar

price supports or Medicaid, it is subsidizing them with my money. But when I am allowed to keep a portion of my income for purposes the government deems worthy, I take nothing from no one so I am not being subsidized.

As for Miller's lament that a majority of Americans, who rent, receive no such "subsidy" at all: poor babies! Means-testing already built into the progressive tax system allows many low-income renters to pay little or no federal or state income tax while remaining fully entitled to government services funded by others. At the local level, some of the federal interest deduction gets eaten up in real property taxes levied to support community schools, libraries and other services, all of which renters use without a second thought. If anyone's being subsidized it's renters, not homeowners.

J.E. LINK

Belmont, Massachusetts

PETA peeve

To the editors:

The lesbian community Norah Vincent monolithologizes in "A Normal Lesbian" (January 8&15) exists only within the quotation marks she uses. There is no official lesbian test to study for. The one she claims to have failed because of her leather shoes sounds more like a PETA peeve. Next time, go to a leather bar. Why, when I was her age, we had to walk seven miles to a lesbian bar. And the next time she gets annoyed at older condescending lesbians, she should puff out that virtually normal individual lesbian chest of hers and call them on their shit, as my younger lesbian friends do. We're just jealous. It was tougher to be a lesbian when the lesbian community was confined to a space smaller than between a couple of quotation marks. Now we're everywhere. We did have better jokes. Grate and Barrel?! Honey, we called it Tongue in Groove.

KATE CLINTON

Provincetown, Massachusetts

Silver screed

To the editors:

Next time you're about to publish anything by Michael Lewis—especially something as not-uncommonly inane as his Hudson River Diarist ("Ho Ho Silver," January 8&15)—fortify yourselves with a re-reading of the piece on *George* by Judith Shulevitz ("George On My Mind"), who aptly criticizes that magazine for featuring articles without a point.

MATTHEW LIFSCHULTZ

Washington, D.C.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Jordan's Rules

Yes, yes, the voice. "HER VOICE STIRRED THE NATION," read the headline of the front-page *New York Times* report of her death on January 17. "A POWERFUL ORATOR, SHE GAINED ATTENTION AT HEARINGS ON NIXON," said *The Washington Post* on the same day. The *Times* went on to call her denunciation of Richard Nixon during the Watergate hearings "Churchillian."

All quite true. I remember the resounding indictment of South African apartheid delivered by this survivor of American apartheid at my University of Texas commencement exercises. Not only is hers the only speech of that evening that I remember—it is the only one of the many commencement addresses I've heard that I can recollect.

Still, there is something patronizing about remembering Barbara Jordan primarily for her delivery—patronizing and misleading, too. For though she was one of the great speakers, she was not one of the great talkers of modern American politics. Her speeches, though memorable, were few, and in response to the demands of a specific occasion. She did not emit poll-tested sound bites. Neither patter nor recitative were in her repertory. It was impossible to imagine her hosting a television show, like Jesse Jackson, or answering callers on a phone-in radio show, like former Governor Mario Cuomo—to name only two of the other American politicians who are counted as orators in our time.

The obituaries have emphasized her declamatory style's debt to the tradition of Southern black preachers (her father was one). Unless I am mistaken, she owed just as much to the other Southern tradition of courthouse and statehouse oratory, which preserved eighteenth-century Anglo-American Ciceronian usages long after they were abandoned in Britain and the Northeast United States. "If you were poor and talented," a childhood friend of Jordan's mentor Lyndon Johnson once told me, referring to the old days in Texas, "the way out was through the church, the courthouse or

the statehouse." Unlike the many black leaders who began their public careers as ministers, including Martin Luther King and Jesse Jackson, Barbara Jordan, who earned her law degree from Boston University, chose the courthouse and the statehouse. The text that inspired her oratory was the Constitution, not the Bible.

"My faith in the Constitution is whole, it is complete, it is total, and I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution." (Note the triple structure, favored by orators of the old school like Lincoln and Webster.) But not all of the obituaries that have quoted her great speech of July 24, 1974, during the Judiciary Committee's proceedings on the impeachment of Nixon, have noted that her paean to the document included a qualification: "'We, the people.' It is a very eloquent beginning. But when that document was completed on the seventeenth of September in 1787, I was not included in that 'We, the people.' ... [T]hrough the process of amendment, interpretation and court decision, I have finally been included in 'We, the People.'"

How subtle, how lawyerly and how important, to stress that the Constitution she was committed to was the Constitution as formally and informally amended, most recently by the civil rights revolution that paved the way for her to become one of the first two black Southerners elected to Congress since Reconstruction.

She was the first many times—the first to lead an all-black group to a draw in a debate with a white team from Harvard; the first black woman to be elected to the Texas state Senate; the first black woman to deliver the keynote address at a national party convention (in 1976 and again in 1992). "POLITICAL PIONEER BARBARA JORDAN DIES"—again, *The Washington Post*.

Like the obligatory references to her power as a speaker and to her courage in battling crippling illness, this list of breakthroughs threatens to consign Jordan to the role of symbolic hero in the kind of drama of identity politics that she rejected. Her stern denunciation of black racism along with white racism at the 1992 Democratic Convention represented the conviction of a pre-multicultural paleoliberal. "I'm neither a black politician nor a woman politician," she once said. "Just a politician." She skipped meetings of the Congressional Black Caucus, telling its

members that she belonged to the Texas Caucus.

As a politician she was a not just a Democrat but a Texas Democrat, from a tradition of centrist liberalism that is—or rather was, for it is now in decline—very close to the kind of liberalism for which this magazine has battled in recent decades. She supported Lyndon Johnson against the radical left in 1968 and helped keep the state delegation—correctly, in my view—on the side of the "hawks" during the Vietnam war. When, in 1988, she delivered the speech seconding the nomination of Lloyd Bentsen for the vice presidency, she memorably expressed the "New Democrat" ideals that had been hers all along.

Her final public service came last summer, when the bipartisan U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform that she headed issued recommendations so balanced, so sound, so judicious that they immediately enraged the utopian left and the nativist right. She was not a great speaker who could make nonsense sound convincing, like William Jennings Bryan or Ronald Reagan. She was a great speaker who was usually right.

President Clinton's presence at the graceful memorial service in Jordan's home church in Houston prompted me, and no doubt others, to recall another recent funeral, the farcical ceremony in Yorba Linda that interred the president whom Jordan helped to bring down. The causes that Barbara Jordan fought for are losing out to the forces that Richard Nixon unleashed. The Congress that Jordan ennobled with her presence and sobered with her reasoning is controlled by affluent radicals who have twice shut down the government in order to cut taxes further for millionaires and billionaires and a Speaker whose idea of oratory is to accuse the opposition party of responsibility for grotesque murders by psychopaths. Jordan's friend and patron Lyndon Johnson, who did more for ordinary Americans of all races than any American politician this century save Franklin Roosevelt, has been followed as Senate Majority Leader, and will possibly be followed as president, by a man whose only public emotional effusion in a long career has consisted of weeping for the dead Richard Nixon.

Barbara Jordan was unique in many ways, but not in the most important—or so we must hope. For in the struggles to come we will have need of leaders like her.

MICHAEL LIND

FEBRUARY 12, 1996

BUDGET BLUSTER

As many federal departments and agencies lurch into their fifth straight month without the necessary appropriations to do their job, the leaders of both parties are spending less and less time searching for a compromise that will balance the budget, and more and more time deciding how to use the impasse to their advantage during the coming campaign. On January 22, Newt Gingrich assured an audience of conservative think-tankers that Clinton's failure to reach a budget agreement would assure congressional Republicans an "annihilating re-election" in November. Democrats, buoyed by public relations successes during the recent budget skirmishes, are no less cynical. "Look, you're dealing with people who are screwing you every day on Whitewater," consultant James Carville counseled Clinton, according to an account in *The Washington Post*. "Why are you giving them so much?"

Remember the deficit? As recently as a year ago, it ranked third—behind crime and unemployment—in a Gallup Poll that asked voters to name "the most important problem facing the country." In the wake of the protracted budget showdown it's back on voters' radar screens. In a Gallup Poll conducted between January 12 and 15, it topped the list of voter concerns (crime is now a distant second). On prudential political grounds alone, then, you'd think Clinton and the Republicans would realize that a year-long stalemate will fuel further voter alienation and anti-incumbent rage. There's also, of course, the small matter of the economy: the much-ballyhooed Clinton economic boom, its strength now in question, could be endangered if financial markets are again shaken by foundering budget talks.

Rather than succumbing to the narcissism of small differences, Washington's budget pugilists should take the rhetoric down a notch and lock in the savings both plans have in common—precisely what the president proposed in his State of the Union address. Leaving aside the radical freshmen, with their genuine, principled commitment to dismantling the New Deal by forcing the government into default, the differences between the president and Congress are far less dramatic than both sides are pretending. When Clinton released his first budget last June, a vast fiscal and ideological gulf separated him from the Republicans. In their conference resolution the Republicans had pro-

posed a cut of \$440 billion in discretionary savings programs. The Clintonites countered with \$208 billion. But in their January budget the Republicans pared their proposed cut down to \$349 billion; and Clinton upped his offer to \$295 billion. That's a difference of only \$54 billion—mere pennies when it comes to the giant federal check-writing machine. It's the same story with Medicare: the gap in projected savings between the two sides has been whittled down from \$146 billion to \$44 billion. And so on with welfare and other anti-poverty programs: a gap of \$69 billion is now a mere \$17 billion. And there is, of course, another sense in which the budget disputants are closer than they'd like to admit. Both proposals spare one of the major culprits in the coming entitlement juggernaut. Social Security—nearly twenty times as large as Aid to Families with Dependent Children—is spared by bipartisan consent.

As Robert Reischauer, former head of the Congressional Budget Office, explains, the oft-repeated argument that it is not the amount of money that separates the two sides but differences over the rules by which it is spent is vastly overstated. Though Clinton has refused to endorse the GOP's far-flung crusade to block-grant all health benefits to the states, he has followed the Republicans' lead by agreeing to allow Medicare beneficiaries to choose from among a spectrum of plans—not including the Republicans' cherished MediSave accounts, but encompassing HMOs and various other capitated health plans. He has agreed to cuts in provider payments that by 2002 are as deep as those in the Republican plan. And he's endorsed a per-capita limit on Medicaid spending, which would rein in the lavish open-ended grant system currently in place.

Judging by the apoplectic rhetoric of the GOP freshmen—"[P]ound these guys"; "Don't give them an inch," according to *The Washington Post*—you'd think the budget mess was about a thunderous clash of political ideologies. Maybe it was once, but not anymore. At this point, it's no puzzle why rank-and-file Republicans are digging in their heels. As they see it, they led the charge for budget balance, and Clinton has managed to steal the credit. But they should look on the bright side. Once he's cut a deal with them, the president will have to live with the consequences. •



NOTEBOOK

SIC TRANSIT: A judge in Stanton, Michigan, sentenced a man convicted of beating his wife to a three-fingered slap on the wrist, saying, "Don't do that." ... Bob Dole watched the movie *Animal House* before making a campaign appearance at the Dartmouth fraternity on which it was based. ... On a GOP fund-raising trip, House Speaker Newt Gingrich picked up some mice and small rodents for the Utica Zoo that were later fed to the zoo's red-tailed hawk. ... A Duxbury, Vermont, elementary-school teacher surrendered her teaching license after being accused of painting a Star of David on the back of a student's neck, which she considered a "lighthearted action." ... After sitting, through opening speeches by senators at a Whitewater Committee hearing, Arkansas businessman and committee witness William Lyon said, "I would appreciate it if they have any more statements of length that they allow me to get my attorney off the time clock first." ...

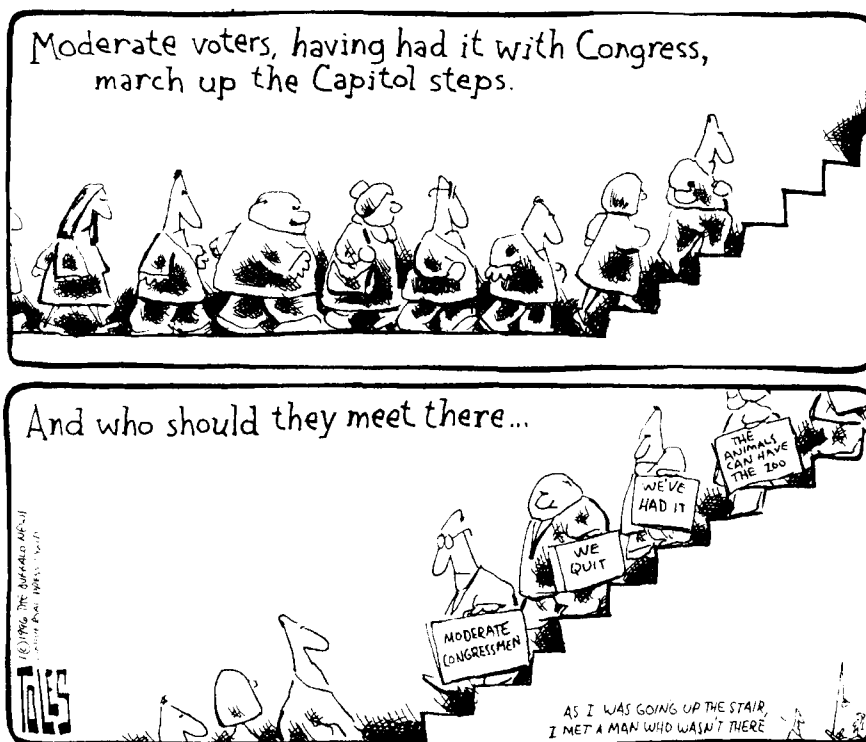
ELECTION FEVER: It's not the first election that counts but the second ... or, more precisely, the fifth. Still, in what is being trumpeted as the first Palestinian experience with democracy, Yasir Arafat was elected to the Palestinian Authority by 88.1 percent of the electorate—not quite as high a proportion as that which used to put Nicolae Ceaușescu into office, but close. It's true that the heavy hand of the PLO was not quite as heavy as that of the Romanian *Securitate*. But it wasn't exactly light either. There were pre-emptive detentions of dissenters and a general air of intimidation masked as popular enthusiasm. Eager to believe their new partner democratic, most Israelis tried not to notice the authoritarian bent of its ways. And 650 international observers, who came to certify the democratic modalities of emergent Palestine, arrived too late to note the contempt with which Arafat himself overruled the results of primaries, replacing victorious candidates with defeated flunkies and forcing many aspirants off the final ballot

entirely and others into opposition. Among the observers, almost all of them ignorant of Arabic and of the hidden codes of Arab culture, were Jimmy Carter, Rosalynn, Amy and a grandchild, which made it a family outing. In the spotlight once again, Carter testified unhesitatingly to the probity and fairness of the process—except, of course, for the role played by the Israelis, whom the former president, not for the first time in his career, found to be bullies, and worse. But then again, this is a man whose favorite regional character is Hafez al-Assad. The big issue before the newly elected Palestinian Council is whether it will go ahead with the renunciation—agreed to on the White

House lawn and at Oslo—of those parts of the Palestinian Charter that pledge the destruction of Israel. The American TV star Hanan Ashrawi says she opposes such a renunciation, as do others now counted as eminences in what is already being called the democratic opposition. If they succeed in blocking this promised annulment, it would be deeply embarrassing, and even crippling, to Shimon Peres and to

Arafat as well. The new president has no one but himself to blame, however. After all, the essence of his campaign, and that of others, was not about peace but about the toughness of his stance against Israel. And since the elections have been warranted as true and tested, the Council's maintenance of the Charter's formal war with Israel would be seen as an expression of the real voice of the people, as doubtless it would be.

NO FREE LUNCH: Last summer when the Democratic National Committee issued a slick catalog peddling the opportunity to rub elbows with top lawmakers, Republicans cried foul. The DNC's topflight package offered two dinners and two breakfasts with the president, a dinner with Vice President Al Gore and a dinner with an unspecified senior administration official for \$100,000. Said Tony Blankley, Newt Gingrich's spokesman, "The Clinton administration has become the famous punch line to the old joke: 'We know what you are. We're just haggling over the price.'" So, it seems, are the Republicans. And you have to hand it to them, they know the value of a



buck. In the shopping list issued this week by the Republican National Committee, lunch with Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole carries a much heftier price tag: \$250,000. Of course, the RNC will also throw in a bonus: four "priority" convention tickets. RNC Chairman Haley Barbour didn't even try to defend the shopping list, saying only that, unlike Clinton, the GOP didn't campaign against the cash-for-access culture. That may inoculate his party against charges of hypocrisy, but at the cost of pleading guilty to corruption. And the damage could be greater still. In a move that throws the GOP's fiscal acumen into question, the RNC proposes giving away breakfast with the Speaker for a mere \$45,000.

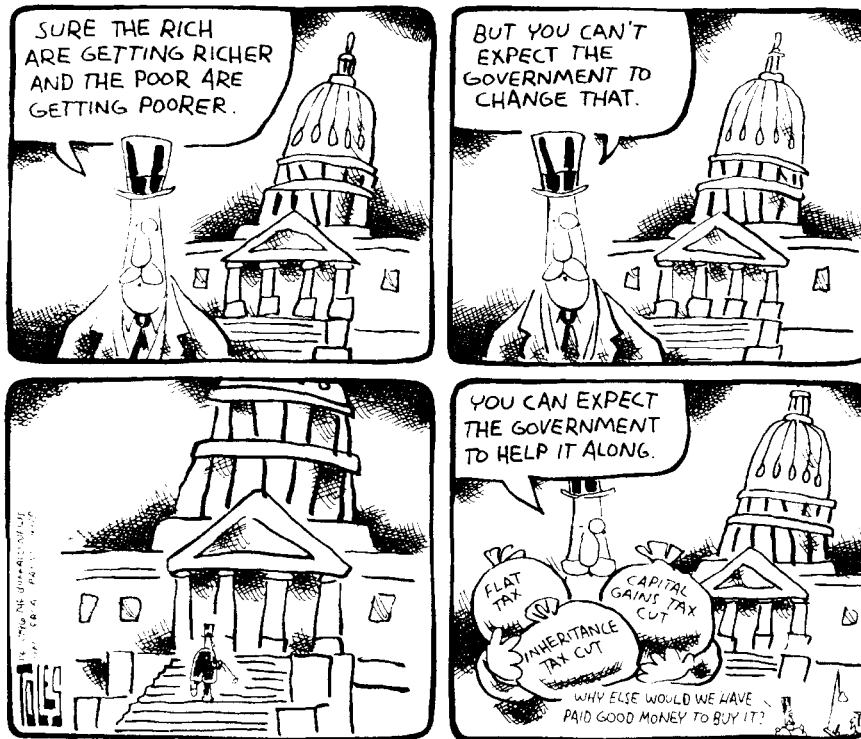
DAYS OF RECKONING: This week in Bosnia the struggle between justice and expedience found yet further expression. Even as U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck was visiting the Serb killing fields, NATO commander Leighton W. Smith Jr. was insisting that "NATO is not—I repeat, NATO is not—going to provide specific security... for teams investigating these grave sites." To his credit, Shattuck stressed that "security will be needed [and that] it is the responsibility of the international force" to provide it. What the military fears, once again, is mission creep, a fear that, in the case of Bosnia, began even before there was a mission. But as we have long argued, and as is made excruciatingly clear in this week's *TNR* cover stories, the West's responsibility goes beyond separating the parties. It must also include the pursuit of justice for the victims of the war for a Greater Serbia. Speaking, we sincerely hope, for his administration and for his president, Shattuck concluded that "ultimately justice and long-term peace must go together." But if justice is to be given any chance at all, the grave sites throughout Bosnia must be protected by NATO troops, and must be protected now. Only then can there be any hope that the lies of the Serbian leadership won't outlive their perpetrators.

THE ENGLER ANGLE: Is public debate on vital national issues insidiously distorted by a liberal press? Of

course not. Well, maybe at *The New York Times* on the issue of welfare reform. Consider that paper's coverage of state reform plans. Last summer, the *Times* ignored Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson's announcement of a radical plan to replace cash welfare with a combination of last-resort public jobs, child care and guaranteed health care. (See "Tommy's New Tune," by Mickey Kaus, *TNR*, September 18&25, 1995.) But in January of this year the *Times* chose to hype—in not one but two successive articles—a far less significant experiment planned by Michigan Governor John Engler. Unlike Thompson's plan, which is to apply statewide, Engler's "Project Zero" applies to fewer than 7,000 fami-

lies in five, mainly rural, counties. Unlike Wisconsin's plan, the Michigan reform doesn't require work, only "participation" in efforts to achieve self-sufficiency. (That could mean work, but it could also mean attending a remedial education class. What, exactly, will be required is "up to the community," says a state spokesperson.) And what was the news angle that justified the *Times's* Engler obsession? Accord-

ing to the *Times*, because Engler is a Republican and his plan eschews time limits and promises child care and transportation subsidies, it is a rebuke to congressional Republican reformers, a "striking departure from the [Republican] welfare measure that President Clinton has refused to sign." But wait a minute. The point of the Republican welfare measure was to turn welfare back to the states in the form of "block grants." The Democratic complaint was that this would prompt governors to destroy the safety net in a "race to the bottom," leaving mothers and children in the streets. In particular, it was argued, governors wouldn't be able to offer sufficient child care. If Governor Engler now proposes a reform plan that includes child care and avoids harsh measures, that isn't an embarrassment for the Republicans' state-based approach. It tends to vindicate the Republican approach. Does anyone doubt that if Engler had gone the opposite way and proposed a draconian benefit cut-off, the *Times's* coverage would have spun that story against the Republicans as well? ("FEARS OF 'RACE TO BOTTOM' COMING TRUE IN MICHIGAN.") Where's Reed Irvine when you need him? •



FLIPPERS

By Paul Offner

They're writing welfare reform's obituary. The omnibus budget bill, thought to be its most likely vehicle, looks like it's run aground. Two weeks ago, when the Republican welfare plan reached the president's desk as a separate bill, he vetoed it, prompting *The New York Times's* Robert Pear to suggest that the battle was over ("The President's action concludes a four-year drama ..."). The prognosis is premature, though. As the president signaled in his State of the Union address, he still wants to sign, and claim credit for, a welfare bill before November. So do the Republicans; and the congressional Democrats, having long since abandoned their welfare reform principles, are in no position to prevent a bad bill from passing.

The impasse can be traced back to last summer, when President Clinton realized that his welfare reform proposal was dead and that the Republicans were about to fulfill his commitment to "end welfare as we know it" without him. So he worked out a deal with Senator Bob Dole that threw the Democrats a few crumbs—a little more money for day care, a prohibition against states making drastic cuts in welfare spending and a rainy day fund to cover caseload increases during recessions. In return, Democrats swallowed the Republican program whole—no more federal guarantee for poor children, a freeze on welfare funding and a five-year limit on cash benefits, which will eventually drop 3 million children from the rolls. Incredibly, Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle called it "an improvement over what we've got now." The president foolishly endorsed it, adding that it contained "critical elements" of his own plan. The Senate vote was 87 to 12.

By December, however, Democratic senators were having second thoughts about their Faustian bargain. The bill that emerged from a House-Senate conference committee would "hurt children, weaken families and cripple state budgets," charged Senator Jay Rockefeller. "A step backward," said Senator Bob Graham. "Punitive," added Senator Russell Feingold. None of them (nor thirty-two other Democrats) seemed troubled by the fact that they had voted for essentially the same bill just three months earlier. What big changes had been made since then? "None," said Pat Moynihan, the Senate's welfare expert.

In defending their about-face, Democrats cite cuts in day care funding. This is a favorite ploy because everyone loves children. But there is almost no difference in day care funding between the welfare bill they supported and its evil twin that emerged from conference. The Congressional Budget Office, now run by Gingrich-Dole appointee June O'Neill (no liberal she) has said all along that most states won't be able to meet the bill's ambitious work requirements because the funds just aren't there.

The Democrats have other complaints about the conference bill, but they don't amount to much. The legislation was changed so that states must put in only 75 percent of the funds they are now spending on welfare (it was 80 percent in the Senate bill). And while the Senate left the issue of family caps (no additional dollars for additional kids) up to the states, the conference committee mandated family caps unless the legislature and governor decide otherwise—which comes to the same thing.

Some have suggested that it was an administration study showing that the Republican bill would add 1.5 million children to the poverty rolls that led the Senate Democrats to flip-flop. Fearing its influence, conservatives ridiculed the study on the grounds that it assumed no change in behavior—"They're assuming welfare reform won't work," said Senator John Breaux. On balance, though, it's hard to believe the study changed many votes. Senators may not be welfare whizzes, but they don't need a study to tell them that a \$60 billion cut in AFDC, Food Stamps and Medicaid will increase the poverty rolls.

The Democrats switched because their attack on Republican extremism was working, Clinton's poll numbers were rising, and they decided they could stand up to the Republicans even on a matter as sensitive as welfare. But it's hard to take them seriously. Having voted once for the Republican plan, their outrage at what is essentially the same bill sounds hollow. Indeed, many Democratic senators voted against it with the expectation that the GOP plan would return—either as part of the budget bill or as a separate bill—and that additional sweeteners would give them cover to vote for something and thus redeem their credentials as welfare reformers.

The fact is that, while its defensive strategy has worked so far, the Democratic Party has lost its way on welfare. Clinton and the congressional Democrats know that the existing system is broken, but they have no plan to fix it—at least none they're willing to fight for. They want to protect poor children, an estimable goal, but that alone does not constitute a welfare reform strategy. Their main objective is simply to deprive the Republicans of a victory, either by branding their program extremist or by claiming it as their own.

It was not always so. Three years ago, Clinton proposed a plan to put welfare recipients to work and acknowledged that it would cost money—to train peo-



ple, to create jobs, to provide day care. The funding was too low because Clinton feared the big-spender label, but it was the best of all the welfare bills introduced in recent years. Unfortunately, though, welfare reform took a back seat to health care reform, and the result was a disaster. (See "They Blew It," by Mickey Kaus, *TNR*, December 5, 1994.) Throughout the long debate on the budget, too, the president's focus was on Medicare and Medicaid; welfare reform came second.

Granted, he got little help from those moderate Republicans who shared many of his views on social policy. Two years ago, ten Republican senators, led by John Chafee and Nancy Kassebaum, wrote the president and reminded him that the welfare system was there to protect children. Last year, when faced with the Gingrich welfare bill, they met constantly, wrote letters and groused endlessly. When the conference report came up in the Senate, they wanted "a better package that isn't so hard on legal immigrants ... and does a better job of protecting children," according to a Chafee aide. Yet with just two exceptions (Mark Hatfield and Ben Campbell), they voted for the bill. Throughout the debate, they held the balance of power—the defection of just three more would have changed the outcome in the Senate. But when push came to shove they weren't there.

Maybe you really can't blame them. After all, it was Clinton who raised expectations with his call to "end welfare as we know it," who let the subject languish during the first two years of his presidency and who cut that awful deal with Dole last fall. After that, how could the Chafees and the Kassebaums be expected to fight on against their own party's leaders? About all we can hope for now is that nothing passes, and the whole issue is put off until 1997. By then, maybe, the Democrats will have come up with a welfare policy they'll stand up and fight for.

PAUL OFFNER is the District of Columbia's Commissioner of Health Care Finance.

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

T HE SPEECH

By Matthew Cooper

On January 3, the president and Mrs. Clinton hosted a private dinner in the small dining room of the residence of the White House. Over squash soup, lamb chops and pineapple Alaska, the Clintons talked to political scientists about the presidency. Thomas Patterson, a Syracuse University professor who has criticized the press for being cynical,

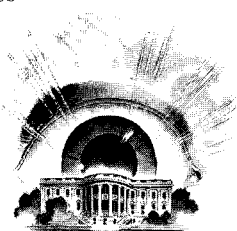
urged the president to appeal to reporters' better instincts. Sheila Mann of the American Political Science Association cast doubt on so-called civics education. "Students know that Thomas Jefferson had slaves," Mann said. "They don't know that he had ideas." According to observers, the Clintons were most intrigued by the work of Wendy Rahn of the University of Minnesota, who talked about the lack of community in American life, speculating that TV might be one cause for the lack of personal trust among young Americans. The Clintons nodded with enthusiasm.

The State of the Union salon has been open for some time now. For months, say Clinton aides, the president has been immersing himself in the big questions facing the country. He's been keeping clips of articles in a large folder, anything on stagnant wages, the middle class. He has pored over Putnam—Robert, that is, he of "Bowling Alone" fame, the oft-cited article arguing that communal bonds are fraying. (A hypothesis that is challenged when one considers that Americans attend church, to take but one criterion, more often than citizens of any other Western nation.) Clinton has dispatched aides like Bruce Reed to find inexpensive ways for government to leverage better behavior out of citizens. The result, said George Stephanopoulos, "is a classically Third Way speech."

Was it? The speech, like all State of the Union addresses, was written by an entourage—led, in this case, by communications director Donald Baer, chief speechwriter Michael Waldman and policy adviser Reed. Clinton himself scrawled out much of the document in longhand and continued to make changes as he practiced the speech in the White House theater. Others kibitzed. Pollster Mark Penn urged Clinton to brag more about his accomplishments; adviser Dick Morris pushed the idea of a TV ratings system. Wielding seven "challenges" and three "questions," Clinton found himself with the checklist that these addresses have become. When it came to imagery, he couldn't say no. Elie Wiesel *and* salute after salute to veterans? One expected to hear: "Coming up after your late local news, my good friend Rosa Parks."

But there were moments of supreme cleverness. The Reaganesque device of pointing to heroes in the balcony has become, in Clinton's hand, a jujitsu move. Consider Richard Dean, the Oklahoma City civil servant/hero, who was first discovered by Vice President Al Gore and his adviser Elaine Kamarck. It was a nifty way to humanize the bureaucrat, to scold the GOP, to remind the country that government is, after all, a serious undertaking. After Dean, it'll be that much harder to have another government shutdown.

By contrast, of course, the Republicans looked petulant, irritable. Someone needs to tell Gingrich to wear makeup. Someone needs to tell Dole to wear less. Puffy and stubbly, the Speaker looked far heavier than the president, who is often lampooned for his weight. Ging-



rich was fidgety, too. And the Republicans in the audience were, at times, just goofy. When Arlen Specter was the only Republican to stand up when Clinton gave his pitch for "common ground," Lauch Faircloth, the curmudgeon of the Whitewater hearings, looked at Specter with pure disdain. Who can wait for this summer's Repub-li-scrum in San Diego?

Dole's moment was particularly garbled. Dole aides know that internal GOP polls in New Hampshire are showing Steve Forbes gaining ground, as close as eight points—a mere puddle to leap in the days remaining until the primary. And so Dole's speech was aimed at Manchester not the middle, the caucuses instead of the country. Dole mentioned "liberals" five times and harumphed about "elites" as if he and Elizabeth resided in a trailer instead of the Watergate. Slurring his words at times, Dole's doldrums delighted the Clintonites who gathered in the Blue Room of the White House after the speech. Over coffee and cookies, Clinton thanked his staff, Wiesel and everyone else who got him through the night.

But the kudos should have been tempered, for the speech revealed something deep: the end of Clintonism. Clinton has, of course, been reviled as hollow, unprincipled. Much of that accusation stands up ... and yet. There has been at the heart of Clinton a real ideology that was about more than polls and pragmatism. Clintonism, the ideology, was built on ideas about the way the world worked—some convincing, others not, but ideas nonetheless. Rule one: training and education are central to American prosperity. There's not much of that Reichian vision left anymore. Sure, Clinton talked about consolidating jobs programs, a merit scholarship program modeled on Georgia's. Worthy, yes. But education-and-training, one point among many, was no more memorable than the tougher-than-thou riffs on school uniforms and kicking people out of public housing.

In one sense, Clinton was true to himself. The appeal to common ground has been a staple of Clintonism from Little Rock days. Whether it was at the National Governors' Association or Renaissance Weekend, the idea that people can chat and get along has been a running theme with Clinton, the alcoholic's child who mediated between warring adults. An appeal to civility is all well and good. But it's worth remembering that common ground is something that is forged, not discovered. It cannot descend, a *deus ex machina*, merely by being invoked. Lincoln's common ground was tangible, sacred earth: the rebaptism of a nation, molded by war, bathed in blood. On issues like affirmative action—contentious and thus conveniently unmentioned in Clinton's poll-driven speech—common ground can't be ordered like room service. Dole, with his talk of "starkly different visions of government" understood the limits of amelioration. Little wonder, then, that the "challenges" eschewed by Clinton were more foreboding than those invoked. There was no challenge to business to abandon corporate welfare. None to the middle class to dispense with entitlements.

I called one of Clinton's salon guests to talk about all

this. George Stephanopoulos had said that the president had been particularly interested in the work of Jean Bethke Elshtain, who teaches social and political ethics at the University of Chicago and writes often for *TNR*. Clinton had spent considerable time with her work *Democracy on Trial* and had invited her to one of his squash-soup symposia, which she was unable to attend. "I was hoping for something kind of punchier," she told me after the speech. The common ground part got under her skin, too. "There's a tendency," she said, "to diminish the differences that actually need to be deepened before they can be engaged." Deepening differences? Alas, at that salon, the president must have been absent. •

THE PRESS

FATHER OF THE SLIDE

By Howard Kurtz

In the end, Phil Donahue, who invented the genre that kept sinking ever lower into a miasma of tawdriness and sleaze, was simply outpaced in the race to the bottom.

Donahue was often touted as the class act of trash TV. Sure, he could be relentlessly self-aggrandizing, once suing for the right to televise the execution of a North Carolina murderer and piously insisting it had nothing to do with ratings. Sure, he embarrassed himself by hosting a seemingly endless parade of transvestites and incest victims, prostitutes and rapists, nudists and neo-Nazis and nymphomaniacs. Sure, he did Joey Buttafuoco, and the man who married his mother-in-law, and the woman who claimed to have had sex with 2,686 men.

But the other day Donahue chatted with none other than Salman Rushdie, the author-in-exile, introducing him as "a front-page twentieth-century historic figure." A few weeks earlier he had spent an hour with Steve Forbes, exploring the less-than-scintillating mysteries of the flat tax. Donahue has done programs on Whitewater, on GATT, on Bosnia—hardly topics you'll see anytime soon on Jenny, Jerry, Ricki, Sally, Montel, Oprah or Geraldo.

And that, of course, was the problem. By the time the 60-year-old talk-show host called it quits last week after twenty-nine years on the air, he had been eclipsed by a younger brat pack that reveled in staged confrontation, in orchestrated humiliation, in screaming mêlées that seemed to soil everyone involved. Donahue was a dinosaur, a relic of an earlier era.

Still, whatever homage is paid him in the coming weeks, it was Donahue who gave the world confessional television, the art of turning individual "victims" and

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

A Battle in D.C.

In recent months, most of the headlines out of Washington have been about the battle over the budget. As a result, another important battle has been nearly ignored. I mean the one concerned with how to fix the District of Columbia's beleaguered school system. The biggest issue here is a proposal by some congressional Republicans to introduce vouchers, which would use public money to pay for D.C. students to attend private schools and public schools in other jurisdictions. Vouchers are touted by supporters as a panacea. The truth is, they have never been shown to improve student achievement or school performance either in the U.S. or in any successful system abroad.

Many readers may not realize that vouchers are part of proposed changes for the D.C. schools because the grants are called *scholarships* rather than *vouchers*. That terminology is important. A few years ago, D.C. citizens turned down a voucher referendum by a huge vote. So congressional supporters call their voucher proposal by the more generally acceptable name of scholarships. But vouchers they are, and they represent an attempt to force on D.C. what voters have already said they do not want.

The argument you most often hear is that vouchers would help poor students escape from lousy schools—and who could deny these youngsters whatever help they can get? Well, there are approximately 80,000 students in the D.C. schools, and many of them are poor. The proposal will fund vouchers for 3,000. Which students will get vouchers? Will they go first to poor children with real academic or behavioral problems and to those with serious handicapping conditions? The answer depends on the private and suburban schools to which students apply, and there is no reason to think these schools will admit all comers. They will be free to choose students using any criteria they like—just the way they are now. And they will be unlikely to accept students with real problems. After all, they have parents who are paying tuition—or hefty tax bills for exclusive suburban schools—precisely because they want to shield their children from other youngsters who have such problems.

The students who get the go-ahead will be those who are already doing pretty well and could be the nucleus of a good student body—if we went with a reform that would help the schools improve. With vouchers taking out the best



Vouchers have never been shown to improve student achievement or school performance.

students, the D.C. schools will get worse. Test scores will go down; the percentage of students who are disciplinary problems will rise; and people who are already discouraged with public education will get a further push to give up on it.

The evidence is that vouchers do not work even for the youngsters who get them. Voucher supporters have talked up their scheme for so long that some people probably think vouchers have been a big success. They haven't. The voucher experiment in Milwaukee, involving under 1,000 children a year for a period of five years, is the largest one to date. It has done nothing to improve either the achievement of the voucher students or students in the system as a whole. And there is no reason to think it will.

But suppose, instead of trying to help a few students escape the school system, Congress bent its efforts towards fixing the D.C. schools so all of D.C.'s students could benefit.

What creates good schools is no mystery. We can see it if we look at the high-performing school systems of other industrialized

nations and at some of the U.S. schools that have begun to turn themselves around. These schools have a core curriculum that embodies high academic standards. They have effective discipline policies to ensure that their classrooms are safe and orderly places where children can learn. They have promotion and graduation policies that honor and demand real achievement from students. And they have solid professional development programs to assist teachers in helping students meet these high standards.

These reforms do not sound sexy or "innovative," but they are absolutely basic and, unlike vouchers, we know they will work. We also know that parents and the public support them. When they are in place, they will improve education for *all* the students in the system.

There is more at stake here than the future of the D.C. schools because congressional leaders promise to push the solution they arrive at in D.C. in cities all over the country. If Congress ignores the reforms that are needed—high academic standards and safe and orderly classrooms—and insists instead on their so-called scholarships, they will speed the demise of public education instead of taking a leadership role in restoring it.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1996 by Albert Shanker.

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their myriad pathologies into mass entertainment. Indeed, the very notion that people should wail about their sexual and social hangups before an audience of millions is the essence of the Donahue legacy. If his legions of imitators have pushed the boundaries of daytime degradation, well, they learned from the master.

Once "Donahue"'s ratings began to sink, and the New York market dropped him, the fact that he had won twenty Emmy awards meant nothing. Those who wanted the raw meat of tabloid theater would not settle for a warmed-over version.

And there were limits to his brand of depravity. For one thing, he tried to alternate between the high ground and the gutter. "In the '70s we had Bob Dole on the show alone for an hour," he told me recently. "We had Dick Gephardt on alone for an hour. We had a mix: 'My husband doesn't kiss me anymore' on Monday and Watergate another day. Today Bob Dole is not going to carry his time period. You try to retain a certain image for yourself that you are interested in more than male strippers, without being so guilt-ridden and conscientious that you wind up a dead hero."

For another thing, he would not stage ambush interviews, the sole purpose of which is to embarrass or enrage the designated victim. As the likes of Jenny Jones and Ricki Lake surged in popularity, it was no longer enough to bring on a man having an extra-marital affair. You had to book his mistress, then trot out his wife, who would learn that the mistress was pregnant while the audience whooped and hollered.

What you rarely saw on any of these shows—"Donahue" and its illegitimate progeny—were average folks grappling with everyday problems. Instead, daytime TV turned into a national freak show, a daily exercise in defining deviancy down. The oh-so-sensitive hosts became adept at placing the thinnest therapeutic veneer over their revolting antics, and viewers joined in a codependent relationship with the producers of such dreck. All human problems were reduced to twelve-step language; people were "addicted" to food, like Oprah, or to men, or to drugs.

Amid this cultural cesspool, it is easy to forget just how revolutionary the "Donahue" show was when it made its debut in Dayton, Ohio, in 1967. Afternoon fare at the time consisted of Merv Griffin, Dinah Shore and Mike Douglas. The onetime altar boy from Cleveland was forced to deal with real-life issues because he was a backwater host who couldn't land the big-name guests.

But Donahue also saw what network programmers did not—that housewives were interested in more than recipes and health tips. He didn't talk down to them. He valued their opinions, venturing into the studio audience, microphone in hand, to ask what they thought. He created the kind of raw, unscripted environment that would later fuel the talk-radio boom.

As the program was picked up in other cities, Donahue moved to Chicago, then New York. Now he was attracting bona fide celebrities, from Ted Kennedy and

Rosalynn Carter to John Wayne and Dolly Parton.

Donahue continued to immerse himself in controversial subjects—abortion, homosexuality, date rape, spousal abuse, breast implants, penile implants—that were largely ignored by the mainstream press. And if Phil put on a skirt for a program on cross-dressing, if sensational topics produced healthy Nielsens, well, who was to argue? As the '80s wore on, such taboo subjects began to pop up more frequently, on "Roseanne," on the evening news, in *Time* and *Newsweek*. The culture had caught up with Phil Donahue.

By 1992 the worlds of politics and entertainment had merged, and "Donahue" became an acceptable forum for an Arkansas governor in a bitterly contested New York primary. Donahue pressed Bill Clinton about Gennifer Flowers, about smoking pot, about the "Slick Willie problem." Finally Clinton got angry, lecturing Donahue about ignoring the "real issues," and the audience erupted in applause. Clinton had won the Donahue Primary.

Phil Donahue loves to make his guests squirm, as I learned on the couple of occasions when I willingly subjected myself to his made-for-television tirades. On one show, I made the unremarkable observation that local TV news ought to cut back on body-bag journalism night after night.

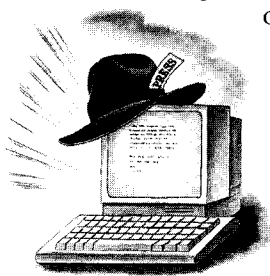
Phil went ballistic, wrapping himself in the First Amendment. "You want the blood and the reality of the news out of there?" he demanded. "You want to sanitize the bombing of the barracks in Lebanon? Howard, I am struck by your suggestion that we don't need to see the body bags at all."

I tried to interrupt, but it was no use. "You probably wouldn't have shown Morley Safer's report on My Lai! Or the thatched huts and the Zippo lighter! You probably wouldn't show the arriving bodies at Dover Air Force Base after military skirmishes in faraway lands! Don't show people these terrible things!" My intellectual argument was irrelevant; I had been reduced to talk-show fodder.

Donahue loves to mount his rhetorical high horse. "Anyone can be a journalist, even me," he said. "You don't have to pee in a bottle. You don't have to pass a test. Do we do silly things? Do we throw spaghetti at each other? Do we wrestle with women in the mud? Yes. So what? Don't watch that day! Spare me this 'ain't it awful, we're all going to hell.'"

In the last year, as corporate sponsors have turned squeamish, it has become fashionable for those who have made millions from daytime dysfunction to disparage the profession. "I didn't feel like taking a shower every time I hosted a daytime show," Geraldo Rivera declared. Oprah Winfrey, too, took the high road—and promptly watched her ratings slide.

The truth is that the market simply became glutted with sleazoid programs, which had finally lost their shock value. After more than 6,000 shows, Donahue kept trying to play both sides of the street, to shovel enough trash that he could still indulge himself with



Bosnia or the budget. It didn't work. In the twilight of his career, the grandfather of talk had to admit, no one he knew watched his show anymore.

HOWARD KURTZ is a *Washington Post* reporter and author of *Hot Air: All Talk, All The Time* (Times Books).

CAMPAIGN JOURNAL

CRYSTAL OWL

By Michael Lewis

January 18:

If you had asked me who of all the rich men I had ever met was least likely to go courting the American voter, I would have given you Steve Forbes's name first. I have rarely encountered anyone so perfectly unhappy shaking hands and making small talk, so thoroughly uncomfortable in his skin. In the sheer unease of his manners and conversation he is a match for the most constipated English aristocrat. And yet under the unwatchful gaze of the cameras something has happened to him. His deep unease has been transformed into a shallow dignity. His reluctance to take any kind of conversational risk now may be interpreted as a calculated display of political prudence. The cameras flatten the landscape they seek to depict and, in the case of Forbes, make the strange seem simply ordinary. They have created the illusion that a candidate is being closely watched when in fact he is being hidden.

The most striking thing about the Forbes campaign: its sheer repetitiveness. Each of Steve Forbes's speeches is not merely a reasonable approximation of the last but a near-perfect replica. All of the other candidates have their favorite lines but try with varying degrees of success to find different ways to say the same things. With Forbes nothing is left to chance; the champion of invention and entrepreneurship is himself a creature of habit and routine. It's the same every time, right down to the gestures and the taut grin he uses to punctuate his lines. He sets his wristwatch on the podium together with his left hand and a single sheet of paper—though he never actually looks at his notes. Instead his eyes sweep across the crowd, left to right, with the same rhythmic efficiency as the carriage of a typewriter. I time his eye movements. Each sweep is almost exactly the same length, about eight seconds.

Offstage he is much the same as on: if he is unable to repeat himself he ducks. Shoulder to shoulder with a journalist in his campaign van, bouncing over potholes at sixty miles an hour, he responds to questions not only in the same words but in the same *tone* as his stump

speech. ("Why do you think the other candidates ganged up on you in Iowa?" "They represent the politics of the past versus a vibrant vision of the future.") Carving through the New Hampshire state assembly cafeteria en route to deliver his speech, he stops to converse with three ladies. It turns out that one of them has worked with the AFL-CIO. "Why aren't you going to keep the minimum wage?" she asks, a bit aggressively. "I worked closely with Lane Kirkland at Radio Free Europe," says Forbes awkwardly, and then bolts before the cameras have time to record the exchange.

I watched Forbes give the same speech half a dozen times before I got close enough to find evidence to support my hunch—or perhaps my hope—that a perfectly strict routine is not as simple as it appears. At the Chubb Life Insurance Company in Concord I find myself standing immediately behind him, waiting for his inner jukebox to produce the same tunes. His notes are not crisp and neatly typed, as you might expect, but a Somme of slashes, signs and keywords. They are the work not of a drone but of a man who is forever trying new things on for size, or at least thinks that he is. The top few inches looks like this:

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+ FRUSTRATE
XXXXXXXXX
+ GTR
- XXXXXX
+ GROWTH
XXXX—
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What's *that* all about? I wonder but am interrupted by a second surprise: the microphone goes on the blink. There's a little crackle on the line that interferes with Forbes's speech. He looks up and spontaneously says, "That's Bob Dole." The room breaks up, and even Forbes himself can't quite believe it—he's made a joke. In the context of his performance that one little line is the equivalent of the invention of the microchip. An awkward smile of true, unexpected delight breaks sloppily across his face. A few years back there was a television commercial for the Special Olympics that concluded with a retarded boy bursting through the tape at the finish line and breaking into a joyous, heart-tugging smile. Forbes now wears exactly the same expression! He has a Special Olympics smile. He speaks for twenty minutes. When he's finished he lifts his left hand, which until then remained curled and frozen on the podium, and reveals a shallow pool of sweat.

January 21:

Rockingham County Republican Dinner. Everyone who attends these banquets claims to hate government. Every ounce of their being left over after pledging allegiance to the United States and singing the National Anthem goes into hating the United States government. Yet the sort of people who turn up for Republican dinners are mainly professional Republicans—local officials, state representatives, Congressmen's wives—and their friends and neighbors pressed into service. They show up at least in part because they think it will help their careers to be met and greeted by government higher-

ups. That is, one purpose of these anti-government rallies, from the point of view of those who pay 100 bucks a plate to attend, is *to get ahead in government*. Go figure.

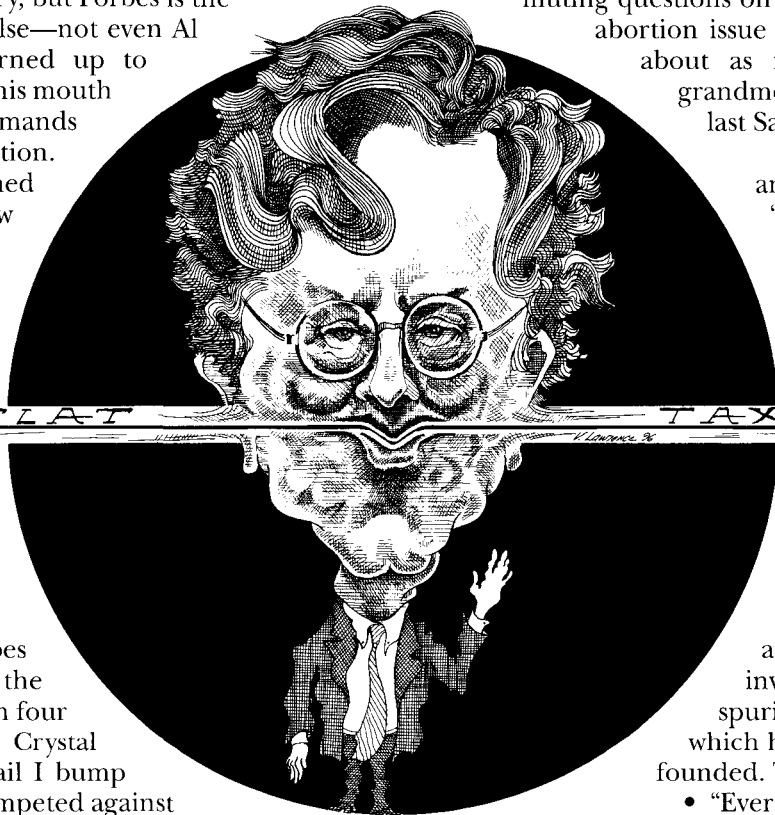
One of the first people I see is Morry Taylor. He wants to know where I've been—as if following anyone other than him is a waste of time. (I have some sympathy with this view.) When I tell him that I've been following Steve Forbes, he gets his grin on and says, "That must be *real* exciting."

A sea of scribblers and one-eyed hairy monsters have turned out in force, but only for Forbes. While Morry stands alone and unnoticed in the corner of the banquet hall, Forbes is surrounded wherever he goes. I feel bad for Morry, but Forbes is the big story, and no one else—not even Al D'Amato, who has turned up to speak out of the side of his mouth on Dole's behalf—commands more than passing attention. I ask a local worthy named Wally Stickney, who now endorses Forbes, why he is doing so well. "He's a real person, and he understands econom-

Forbes represents the politics of repression. He has offered up his tax plan, and the economic prosperity that will supposedly ensue from it, as a cure for abortion, illiteracy, crime and premarital sex. He's clearly both a relief to his fellow businessmen who never were terribly interested in abortion and a face-saver for those warriors who have grown weary of the war. Why has Forbes won endorsements from professional pro-lifers such as former New Hampshire Senator Gordon Humphrey even though he is pro-choice, however ambiguously? I think it's because he has offered them an out from a fight they wished they'd never picked. His

intense social discomfort has the strange effect of muting questions on social issues; to raise the abortion issue with Steve Forbes seems about as natural as telling your grandmother that you got laid last Saturday night.

At length Forbes rises, and restates his claim that "there's no real distinction between values and economics," which is exactly the opposite of what a professional



ics," says Stickney, a pair of facts you might not glean from meeting Forbes.

On his résumé Forbes claims truthfully to be the only person who has won four times "the prestigious Crystal Owl award." On the trail I bump into a journalist who competed against Forbes for the prize. The award was a publicity stunt for the U.S. Steel Corporation, he says. Journalists were handed a list of questions and asked to guess such unknowable events as next year's rate of inflation. If there was a tie it was broken by guessing the Super Bowl score. Most journalists took it all as a great joke. Forbes took it seriously, pursued it fiercely and won it repeatedly. Very WASP—like being good at croquet.

Together with his demeanor, the prize now forms the cornerstone of his claim to economic literacy. Steve Forbes looks and acts like the sort of person who should know all about economics and not much about anything else. There is a spectrum with passion on one end and money on the other onto which all the Republican candidates can be slotted. Alan Keyes defines the one end; Forbes the other. Forbes is like a WASP dad: the only subject on which you can even imagine talking heart to heart with him is money and, as a result, often when you think you are talking about money you are actually talking about something else.

economist would tell you on the first day of class. He then furthers the gap between himself and the discipline he invokes by asserting the two spurious economic claims on which his successful campaign is founded. To wit:

- "Every time we have lowered taxes in this country government revenues have risen." This is highly misleading. A call to the Treasury reveals that nominal tax receipts have gone up every year—thanks to economic growth and inflation—but in general have risen less after taxes have been cut than after they have been raised. That Forbes's mind has frozen around his assertion illustrates that the Laffer Curve proponents have come to resemble the people they deplore. They began by pointing out that if you raised tax rates from extremely high levels—say from 90 to 100 percent—you might actually suffer a decline in tax revenues. But they have done this for so long that they have forgotten about the other end of their curve: by lowering tax rates from extremely low levels the government must at some point suffer a decline in revenues. The big question is where the curve bends. Forbes's flat tax and stump rhetoric implies that this occurs at a tax rate of about 17 percent. The evidence of the Reagan years suggests otherwise. I certainly would not work harder if Steve Forbes lowered my

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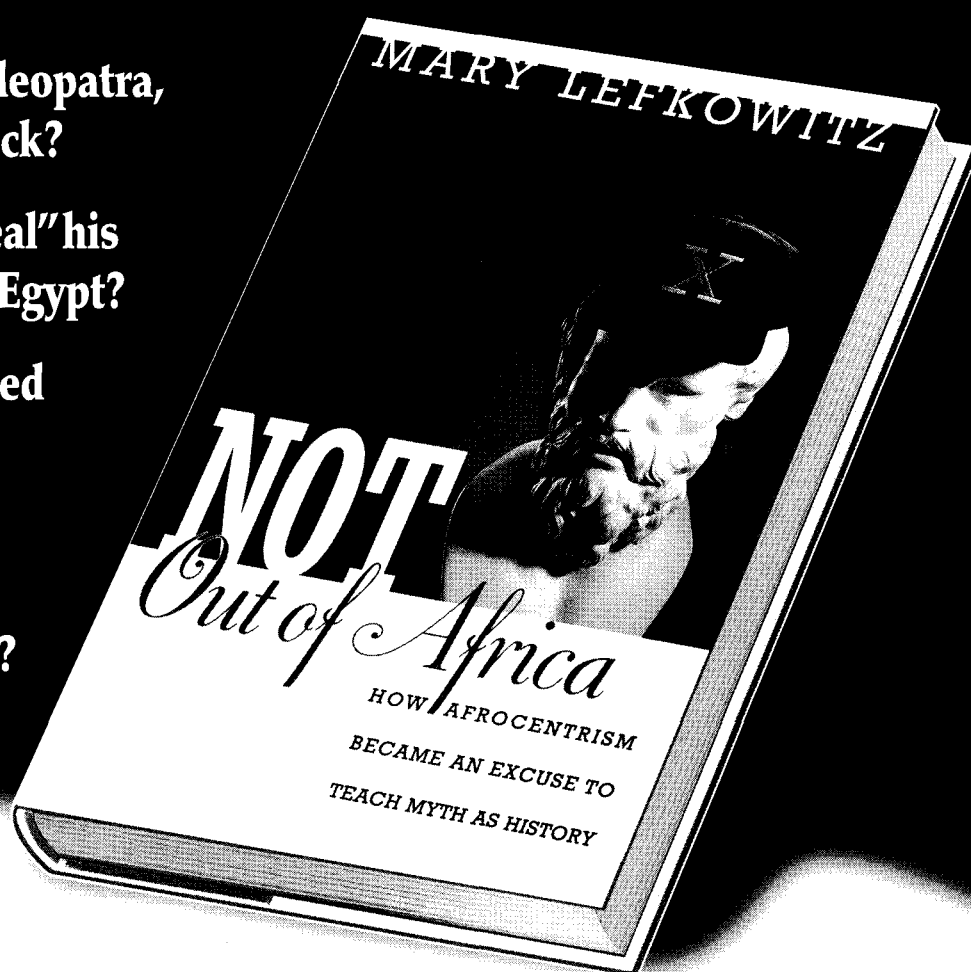
—CLARENCE E. WALKER, University of California, Davis

**Were Socrates, Cleopatra,
and Hannibal black?**

**Did Aristotle "steal" his
philosophy from Egypt?**

**Was Plato educated
by Africans?**

**Did the ancient
Greeks espouse
white supremacy?**



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taxes, and I'll bet he wouldn't either.

• "Cutting taxes leads to economic growth." This is his other great claim, but again the evidence of the Reagan years speaks otherwise. As the economist Paul Krugman told me, "As surely as we know anything about the economy we know that the Reagan tax cuts had no visible impact on the economy's growth rate."

January 22:

Two factories, one Chamber of Commerce and a Rotary Club. When you tour a factory with Morry Taylor you leave understanding how it works. When you tour a factory with Steve Forbes you receive a little lecture from its manager to which Forbes responds with little nods. He never asks a question or displays the slightest curiosity about or pleasure in how things work. His relation to the means of production is fully alienated.

The Rotary Club convenes for lunch at a family restaurant outside of Portsmouth. Before Forbes rises again to proclaim his message of vibrant optimism, he must eat. He follows the chief Rotarian to the buffet table and then through the line. He watches what the Rotarian does and mimics him exactly. Self-consciousness at the buffet table is only natural; we all find ourselves wondering whether we have taken too much of the sprightly roast beef and not enough of the withered lettuce. But Forbes takes the fine art of buffet repression to a ridiculous extreme. He takes precisely the same amount of everything as the Rotarian and arranges his plate so that it is identical—right down to the placement of the giant bread roll.

While the Rotarians move through the line Forbes sits down and eats alone. He works through the plate the same way he always does—with no pleasure and perfect discipline. He begins with the rice and does not stop until he has finished off every last grain of it. Moving clockwise he polishes off the rest of his food in modules. First the chicken, then the salad, then the beans and so on until nothing remains but a large cold bun. This is the only food he treats with interest. He disembowels the soft doughy part from the harder shell and rolls this into little wet bread balls. When the ball is perfectly smooth and round he pops it into his mouth. At the end of his lunch his plate is perfectly clean save for a single slice of radish.

He gives the same speech, decrying skeptics and naysayers and small-minded people who do not grasp the power of the animal spirits that will be unleashed by his tax cuts. His core belief is that the American people are caged animals. I am skeptical, as I always am of theories of human behavior that fail to explain the conduct of the theorists. Afterwards a local TV interviewer takes Forbes off to one side and attempts to do to him what he did to the bread roll. "We've heard a lot about your flat tax, but what kind of person is Steve Forbes?" he asks, reaching for the doughy part.

"He's forward-looking, dynamic, optimistic," replies Forbes mechanically. The interviewer does not even know how to proceed. He gives up on the personal and returns to the tax plan. End of story.

Only it isn't. It's a rule of American politics that you cannot pass go without collecting your share of personal abuse. Forbes's rise in the polls has everyone aching for a scandal. As he left the Rotary Club meal he ran smack into a giant ring of press people just like the ones you see in the movies. Everyone but me seems to know when these are supposed to form; I am forever racing around the fringes trying to get in. But this time I happen to be standing just behind Forbes: I see them as he sees them. At the front are three pretty television reporters, two women and a man. They wear creepy expectant smiles.

"When will you address questions about your personal life?" asks the most evil-looking of the bunch. "Ask me anything you want," says Forbes. His owl eyes blink through his coke-bottle glasses, and the TV hack looks confused. For the first time I think: this guy is tough, tougher than anyone knows. Anyone who tries to take his dignity away from him has got a war on his hands.

"What about your father's . . . personal life," says the hack, fishing. He's still smiling creepily in anticipation of Forbes's incipient anger or panic. I can't quite capture how repulsive this TV guy was; any ordinary person would have felt the urge to punch him in the mouth. The question was even more disgusting for being put in such a chickenshit way. "These people are evil," I said to the guy on my right who, upon closer inspection, proved to be Bill Dal Col, Forbes's campaign manager. But he's smiling too: it's part of his game. "This is America," he says.

"My father is dead," says Forbes, now in full WASP mode. "I'll answer any questions about me."

All at once you can see these people wilt. They have no idea what to do or to say. Having persuaded themselves of their power to ruin not just candidacies but lives, they have worked themselves up into a collective frenzy. But the best they can do when faced with the candidate for repression, a man whose own wife probably does not know whether he wears boxers or briefs, is to ask him about his father. And they couldn't even do *that* properly. Right then and there, between a strip mall and a Dunkin' Donuts, they just backed off. Within moments Forbes was once again talking safely about money, and no one knew what to ask him.

That night, not long after we boarded the plane for Morristown, Forbes reached behind his seat to retrieve a plate of chocolate chip cookies. In the context of his character it seemed like a wanton act. He offered them around and, after an ABC reporter and I had each helped ourselves, he took one for himself. Then he carefully returned the plate to its shelf behind his seat. A few minutes later, however, he had the plate on his lap again and was giving the cookies a long once over, trying to decide whether to go for the dark chocolate or the light fluffy kind. Suddenly he remembered us; again he proffered the plate. This time we declined.

Then it is as if he is seized by his old sense of proportion, or perhaps a resentment of his own desire: he won't have a cookie either. He returns the plate to the rear of the plane and answers my question about his tax plan. •

THE INSTITUTION THAT SAW NO EVIL

By David Rieff

Only two months after the replacement of UNPROFOR, the U.N. peacekeeping force in Bosnia, by IFOR, the 60,000-strong NATO-led army deployed in the wake of the Dayton peace agreement, traces of the U.N. military presence are already hard to find. A few white-painted trucks and armored personal carriers not yet restored to their original martial green and a few tattered blue flags and logos are almost all that remain of an operation whose passing virtually no one in Bosnia and few even inside the U.N. itself speak of with anything except relief. Peace may have come to Bosnia, however belatedly and provisionally, but that's no thanks to the U.N. or its peacekeeping operation. On the contrary, the lesson of Bosnia seems to be that peacekeeping, touted by the U.N. secretariat as recently as five years ago as one of the principal means of ensuring international order, is probably morally bankrupt and certainly an idea whose time has passed.

And yet U.N. officials both on the ground in the former Yugoslavia and within the secretariat and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York continue to console themselves with the belief that in Bosnia the U.N. sacrificed itself as the whipping boy of the international community. After the siege of Sarajevo, the longest in modern European history, and the mass murders of Srebrenica, it may seem astonishing that they continue to hew to this line. That they do so nonetheless is eloquent testimony to the fact that Bosnia was the place where the world organization definitively lost its moral compass. For to have behaved as the U.N. did in Bosnia, as if the moral principles on which its legitimacy rests were luxuries that, operationally, it could not afford, is a disgrace from which the U.N. may not recover, or deserve to recover. And yet it is important to understand the reasoning behind the disgrace, if only to forewarn the citizens of some city yet to be condemned to martyrdom of the destiny that befell Sarajevo, Srebrenica and countless other Bosnian towns when United Nations peacekeepers were deployed there.

There were so many motivations for why the United

DAVID RIEFF, who began reporting on the Bosnian war in the summer of 1992, is a frequent TNR contributor.

Nations acted as it did. The institution was the great powers' fig leaf, and those who served the U.N. in the former Yugoslavia were right to resent that fact. But their humiliation over the use to which peacekeeping was put clouded their judgment. Apart from Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the U.N.'s Special Rapporteur for Human Rights and former Polish Prime Minister, none, from Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on down, dared to speak frankly, to state that the mission was impossible and that it was time to get out. And because they did not say this openly for a host of reasons—a Secretary-General who wanted to be re-elected and could not risk the ire of any of the permanent five members of the Security Council; his subordinates for whom public dissent was unheard of in the United Nations, a bureaucracy that historically has had as little tolerance for dissent as the Roman Catholic Church; the prospect of losing a good, tax-free job—they instead twisted the truth so that they could justify what they had done and what they had refused to do and even to say.

There was one moment, in the late fall of 1994, when peacekeeping officials did engage in a debate about what they should do next. This was just after the U.N. had responded to a combined Bosnian Serb and Croatian Serb attack on the Bihac pocket by calling in NATO air strikes. The Serbs had responded by taking hundreds of peacekeepers hostage. At that point, Shashi Tharoor, the peacekeeping official with day-to-day responsibilities in New York for the former Yugoslavia, wrote a confidential memo to Yasushi Akashi and to Kofi Annan, the head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, questioning UNPROFOR's viability. "The arguments we have always used in favor of the continuation of UNPROFOR," he wrote, are, "on the strategic level, that it alleviates the consequences of the conflict, limits the war from spilling beyond the borders of the former Yugoslavia, and helps create conditions that facilitate the work of the negotiators; and, on the tactical level, that its deployment and method of work (through daily co-operation with the parties) gets humanitarian aid through, saves lives, prevents worse excesses, and is preferable to any alternative." The problem, Tharoor added, was that "recent Serb actions have served to undermine that case." Tharoor insisted that he was offering his memo on the future of UNPROFOR "in a

spirit of devil's advocacy," but for once a peacekeeping official was facing the actual situation squarely. If, Tharoor argued, the pattern of the Serbs blocking humanitarian aid and detaining, harassing and sometimes targeting United Nations personnel continued, it would render UNPROFOR's mission "unviable, and remove the arguments in favor of working with the co-operation of the Serbs."

In his memo, Tharoor reluctantly recommends that UNPROFOR take a harder line with the Serbs. Supplying blue helmets and needy civilians with or without the Serbs' consent, he argues, even if such actions entail calling in NATO air strikes, is "the only option available compatible with UNPROFOR's self-respect." The conclusion is all the more remarkable because, until this memo was written, Tharoor, who was widely regarded as one of the U.N.'s most brilliant younger officials, had firmly rejected any calls to end the U.N.'s policy of cooperation with the Serbs. But he now argued that unless the U.N. took strong action, "we may be doomed to watch helplessly as the United Nations suffers further obstruction and harassment and our hand is forced by events beyond our control, involving either an unavoidable NATO air strike or U.S. action on the arms embargo."

What Tharoor predicted in fact took place. But his memorandum was rejected, and he himself took the matter no further. Indeed, when his memo was leaked and he was unexpectedly confronted with his arguments by ABC's Peter Jennings, Tharoor insisted that he had written them in a period when things had looked very bleak but that, in the interim, they had improved. They *had*, at the time that Tharoor taped his conversation, but a few months later they would deteriorate again. By the time the ceasefire Jimmy Carter brokered collapsed in the spring of 1995, the Serbs had closed the Sarajevo airport, and, even before the mass murder in Srebrenica, the U.N. was again being humiliated and prevented from fulfilling its mission along the Serb-Bosnian government confrontation lines. UNPROFOR and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations were again refusing to face the reality that Tharoor's memo had briefly explored.

Institutionally, this was probably inevitable. To have acted differently, independently, would have flown in the face of the United Nations' bureaucratic tradition, which is one of abject subservience to the wishes of the permanent five members of the Security Council. But if the U.N. rejected the insights it could have drawn at any time about the real nature of its mission in Bosnia, it did so in equal measure because of an ingrained sense of its own special virtue. One of the more curious features of the United Nations is that its officials often talk about it as if it were a Church. More than a few U.N. officials, like officials of the major humanitarian relief organizations, would, by temperament, likely have been missionaries a century ago. Mark Cutts, the Anglo-Argentine chief of the UNHCR in Sarajevo in 1995, told me once that "I went to Durham University intending to be a missionary like my father. I

left an agnostic. What I do believe in is the United Nations."

Cutts was anything but an anomaly. In Bosnia, as in most U.N. operations, it was common in private to hear U.N. officials utter matter-of-factly that curious phrase, "I believe in the United Nations," as if that clinched the matter. Certainly, it helps explain why from the beginning it was so difficult for United Nations officials to accept the idea that the Bosnian disaster could be even in part their fault. For them, such a charge was not only wrong in fact, but was what in philosophy is known as a category mistake. A government can be wrong, as a country can be wrong. But a Church cannot be wrong.

It is a self-conception the United Nations shares only with Roman Catholicism. But where the Catholic Church cannot be wrong, in its own eyes, because on doctrinal matters Church teaching is infallible, the United Nations, according to its officials, is never wrong because for all intents and purposes it does not exist. When the U.N.'s supporters argued, on Bosnia and on many other questions as well, that it was inappropriate to blame the U.N. because the institution could be no better than its members wanted it to be, the claim sounded reasonable. And yet to accept it is to accept the view that the United Nations is quite simply the only body devised by human beings in the history of the world that can never be held accountable for its actions.

That claim seems preposterous, and, in this bald form, every United Nations official in the Balkans would have rejected it. And yet, these same officials expected the world to take seriously the claim that U.N. peacekeepers had acted with perfect impartiality, that they had no views of their own that they allowed to get in the way of the administration of the mandate they had received from the Security Council. And yet everyone in UNPROFOR and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had views; it was the suggestion that the policy recommendations they made derived not from these views but from the mandate imposed on the U.N. that made no human sense. The first UNPROFOR commander, the Indian general Satish Nambiar, was regularly accused by UNHCR officials in 1993 of holding pro-Serb views. One senior official told me at the time, "When Nambiar looks at Izetbegovic, he sees Jinnah. For him, Izetbegovic is a man who ruined a perfectly good multi-confessional country, just as Jinnah ruined India in 1947 by insisting on a separate Pakistan." Susan Woodward, the American academic who did political analysis for Yasushi Akashi, was widely viewed even among her colleagues at UNPROFOR as being pro-Serb. And the U.N.'s chief negotiator, Thorvald Stoltenberg, proved, when he claimed that all Bosnian Muslims were really Serbs, that far from being impartial he subscribed to the Serb nationalist view of Bosnian history.

Other individuals may not have acted out of the allegiances imputed to them, but it is always more realistic to believe that people act out of what they think and feel rather than some Platonic ideal of disinterestedness. In the real world, when people describe them-

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selves as disinterested, it usually means they either don't care or wish they could deal with something else. Certainly, Boutros-Ghali's impatience with the question of Bosnia only deepened during the years of UNPROFOR's deployment. Asked by an interviewer a few weeks before Srebrenica fell what the United Nations had learned from Bosnia, the Secretary-General replied, "[B]osnia has created a distortion in the work of the U.N. We are applying less attention to what is going on in Burundi, in Georgia." His ambition, Boutros-Ghali said, was "to pay attention to the marginalized." That did not include Bosnia. Despite the suffering there, he insisted, "people outside *are* paying attention."

This was in 1995, three weeks before the greatest massacre to occur on the European continent since the Second World War. But Boutros-Ghali remained faithful to his initial view of the conflict, expressed in Sarajevo in December 1992: it was a rich man's war, not worthy of the attention it had received. Three years later, he did not seem to have realized that, among other things, Bosnia had become for the United Nations what the Vietnam war was to the United States. He resented having had to deal with Bosnia, and he refused to confront its implications for the future of the U.N. It was hardly surprising, in an old-fashioned vertical hierarchy like the United Nations, that the Secretary-General's views would permeate all the way through to the most junior UNPROFOR clerk.

And yet how the United Nations believed it could confront one of the great political crises of the twentieth century with, in the main, no views about its rights and wrongs other than a generalized condemnation of all sides, and the sense that its mandate represented a deformation of the work the organization should have been doing, is a mystery. A greater mystery is why it never attempted to extricate itself once its initial efforts had proven such a failure. U.N. officials interpreted the fact that their initial objections to a peacekeeping deployment had been overridden by the Security Council as condemning them to silence thereafter. But this was only the case because they did not speak up.

When asked why, even granting that it could do nothing more in Bosnia, the Secretary-General did not at least state publicly that the operation was a failure, senior U.N. officials tended to smile politely and shake their heads. In public, Boutros-Ghali, that least humble of Secretary-Generals, said over and over, "I am only a humble servant of the Security Council." In private, United Nations officials insisted that the most powerful member states simply would never permit a Secretary-General to speak his mind in this way.

But even if this is true—and since Boutros-Ghali never tried it we shall never know—that is only because from a very early point in his tenure, the Secretary-General was running hard for re-election. The point was not so much that defying the member states made no institutional sense—if the Secretary-General cannot use his office as a bully pulpit then it really is little more than a servicing bureaucracy on the model of the Orga-

nization of African Unity—but that it made no political sense. If Boutros-Ghali wanted the votes of the French, the British, the Russians and the Americans, who disagreed so fiercely on Bosnia, there was nothing for him to do but adopt a minimalist approach to the problem and say as little as possible, since anything he could say was bound to offend one or another of the permanent five members of the Security Council.

And since U.N. officials were perfectly aware that so many of the fifty-odd resolutions and eighty-odd presidential statements passed by the Security Council were in fact designed by individual member states not to effect a better outcome in Bosnia but to assuage outraged public opinion back home—in other words, were ends in themselves rather than new initiatives designed to do something effective for Bosnia—it was hardly surprising that they felt they were bearing the brunt of criticism that should have been directed at the national governments concerned. U.N. officials could have referred most of the blame to the member states, while acknowledging their own shame and, indeed, their just portion of guilt over the fact that, however many lives had been saved, the U.N. had, willingly or unwillingly, presided over the destruction of Bosnia and the Bosnian Muslims. Instead they insisted that they bore no responsibility for these disasters whatsoever.

To say, as Yasushi Akashi did at the time of Srebrenica (but as U.N. officials charged with dealing with Bosnia did as a matter of course), that he "could understand" the reasons for the actions of both sides, was to say in effect, "a plague on all of them," to make it known that, when all was said and done, one did not care that much what happened.

To be sure, Akashi was an extreme example, a man notable, according to a number of people I spoke to who served under him, for being quite unmoved by the Bosnian conflict. For him, I was told, it was task that he had been assigned to deal with, and, as a career United Nations civil servant—Akashi, too, regularly spoke of his service to the U.N. in quasi-religious terms, alluding to his "belief" in the organization and speaking of himself as "a man of the U.N."—one he felt duty-bound to discharge. Bosnia was never a cause for him, as it was for his opposite numbers in the UNHCR, Jose Maria Mendiluce and Nicholas Morris, never something that seemed to engage him except in the most narrowly constrained professional sense. Many of us assumed at the time that this meant Akashi was pro-Serb. But I now think we were wrong. Akashi wasn't *even* pro-Serb.

The Secretary-General seems to have shared his Special Representative's indifference. "I am like a doctor," Boutros-Ghali placidly told one interviewer. "I diagnose the patient and make certain recommendations for his cure. But if he does not follow my advice, it is hardly my fault." The Secretary-General's remarks, in all their obtuseness and complacency, sum up perfectly the U.N.'s stance throughout the Bosnian tragedy. There is no moral passion, not a breath of indignation and cer-

tainly no acceptance of even the most tangential responsibility. The United Nations, for Boutros-Ghali, did what it could, given the mandate it received from the Security Council. If things did not go as well as they might have, this is not the fault of the parties. The Secretary-General did not quite go so far as to say, as France's President Jacques Chirac is reported to have done, that all the belligerents were "brutes and barbarians" or, as one British Foreign Office official put it to Michael Williams, UNPROFOR's Director of Public Information in 1993 and 1994, "they're all cannibals, dear boy," but the implication is clear. The United Nations has not failed the Bosnians; the Bosnians have failed the United Nations.

It is only possible to maintain such a stance if one leaches the conflict of its political and moral sense. "Sad to say," wrote one UNPROFOR staff member in an open letter defending the U.N.'s role in the former Yugoslavia, "but [heroes] may be an illusion created by CNN and by public intellectuals in search of simple truths, noble victims, and terrible villains." The only ones he was willing to concede were heroic "are the people who tell us they just want the war to end." For this official, the leaders were all the same. He is not interested in exploring the justice of their conflicting claims, only in pointing out they are in conflict. Indeed, the one thing he does not want to do is judge their ideas. Instead, he offers an entirely formalistic, contentless analysis of the tragedy. For him, it seems, impartiality means doling out blame to all sides . . . impartially. All the belligerents, he writes, "bargain hard and all appear loathe to make concessions for peace. All retain their maximal goals regardless of the price paid by their people." In Bosnia, he insists, everyone's hands are dirty.

The goals in question are not stated, let alone judged. "I will not conclude," the UNPROFOR official writes, by "naming the aggressor." He implies that he declines to do this because he rejects such simplistic ascriptions of blame. What the U.N. never wanted to understand was that without such an analysis, all its actions in the former Yugoslavia led it not to impartiality or good works, but to collusion with aggression. That may not have been the intention, but it was the result. And it has become so pervasive that even Elisabeth Rehn, the Finnish politician who succeeded Tadeusz Mazowiecki as the U.N.'s Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, and might have been expected to know better, told an interviewer as she took up her post that if she did her job properly, she "would be condemned by all sides."

In fact, one side, the Bosnian government, had consistently welcomed human rights investigations and declared that any of their own personnel indicted for war crimes would be turned over to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. They were able to do this not because they were better at publicity than the Serbs or the Croats, but because, unlike the other belligerents, they were actually committed to the rule of law. The equivalence that the U.N. was at such pains to

insist upon simply did not exist. This is not to say that the extradition of a leading Bosnian commander—a Nasir Oric, say, who already in the fall of 1995 was one of the most-discussed prospects for the first senior Bosnian government figure liable to be indicted—would have been easy to accomplish. He had his protectors in Sarajevo, just as General Mladic and General Mrksic, the officer who had ordered the destruction of Vukovar in 1991, and who had both already been indicted by the Tribunal, had theirs in Belgrade. But unlike the Serbs and the Croats—the day after a senior Croat officer was indicted, President Tudjman ostentatiously promoted him—the Bosnian government was serious about human rights, just as they were serious, for all the talk of one-party rule and Islamic fundamentalism, about a state based on citizenship rather than ethnic identity.

But for the U.N. to have acknowledged any of this would have meant that the entire rationale for its behavior in Bosnia would have had to be re-examined. As long as all sides were equally guilty, as long as the U.N. could hew to its fundamentally apolitical understanding of the Bosnian conflict as pitting a suffering civilian population that just wanted peace against various military and political formations intent on continuing the war, it did not have to examine its own role. Furthermore, it could insist that it, practically alone among the parties both external and internal, had behaved honorably in what one UNPROFOR official described as the "firm and long-standing United Nations tradition of peacekeeping rooted in international law, impartiality and procedural objectivity."

The sentence is remarkable. It only holds together if all sides are equally guilty. Otherwise, how can impartiality, which means making no distinction in one's practical dealings between someone who commits genocide—as the International War Crimes Tribunal has accused Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic of doing—and its victims, be consistent with international law in which genocide is a crime? But since the United Nations did not believe, or at least had managed to convince itself, that there was no fundamental issue of justice at stake, it could without scruple sacrifice everything else in its mandate on the altar of ending the fighting. The Secretary-General became clearer and clearer on this point as the fighting wore on. "The result of the negotiations," he told an interviewer, "may not be equity, but it may be peace. Then you have a problem: What is more important, peace or peace at the expense of certain principles of equity? My theory is that what happens in a war is so terrible that peace is better, even if it is not a just peace."

But of course the Secretary-General's words begged the question. In his office at DePaul University in Chicago, Professor Cherif Bassiouni, who served as the U.N.'s principal war crimes investigator for the former Yugoslavia between 1992 and the time his old friend Boutros Boutros-Ghali dismissed him in 1994,

has a coffee mug engraved with the words, "If you want peace, work for justice." That saying encapsulates what the U.N. never understood, or never wanted to understand, about Bosnia. The point is not to weigh the relative merits of a war against an unjust peace—anyone who will not have to kill or die in such a war should think a great deal before daring to venture an opinion—but rather, as Judge Richard Goldstone, the chief prosecutor of the Hague Tribunal, has pointed out, that without a measure of justice there can be no durable peace. In other words, the choice the U.N. has offered, between justice and peace,

between the mandate and morality, has been a false one all along. What people like Goldstone and Bassiouni have been saying is that without Nuremberg, its jurisprudential problems notwithstanding, Germany could never have reintegrated into Europe; and without a bringing of the Karadzics and the Mladics to account, there will be no peace in the Balkans, only lulls in the slaughter.

The guns of Bosnia, and of all the future Bosnias that will surely loom up before us over the course of the next quarter century, will not fall silent until that Chinese wall between peace and justice is torn down. •

A firsthand account.

THE EVIL AT OMARSKA

By Rezak Hukanović

What follows is a firsthand account of life in a Serb concentration camp. The author is a 46-year-old Bosnian poet and journalist. Before being taken prisoner one morning almost four years ago, Rezak Hukanović's life in Prijedor, a small city of 112,000 in northwestern Bosnia, was "typical" in many ways. As he said in an interview, in most cases he "either didn't know or didn't care what the nationality of his friends and neighbors was."

The course of aggression against non-Serbs in Prijedor was also typical. In Prijedor, and many other places in the interior, the occupying Serb forces systematically seized and murdered the local elites: mayors, lawyers, doctors, judges, teachers, engineers, owners of cafés and art galleries. (Another account of the ethnic cleansing of Prijedor can be found in reporter Roy Gutman's *A Witness to Genocide*, which records many of the same names of victims, as well as details of the operations in the camps.)

Hukanović has written this memoir in the third person. He has explained that he calls himself Djemo throughout because he felt at the time that the brutal events he describes were happening to someone else.

What appears here is part of a book-length memoir that was published in Norway two years ago. It has not yet been published in English.

Saturday, May 13, 1992. A sunny day. Djemo didn't wake up until around 9:30. Actually, it was the deafening sound of shooting outside that woke him up.

For the past few days, since the shooting started in Prijedor, Djemo hadn't slept at his place. It wasn't safe. One side of his house faced the main road, while the other, the side that faced against the light, looked down on a dense acacia grove. Even though it was almost in the center of town, the grove seemed like a thick forest.

Only last night shots had been fired from around Pećani, on the other side of the grove, more frequently and with greater force than usual. It took Djemo a long time to fall asleep. He still remembered the shooting on New Year's Eve. Bursts of fire from all kinds of weapons rang out from Pećani until daybreak: it was as if they had been competing to see who could fire the longest round. Incendiary bullets had pierced the sky above Prijedor.

It didn't seem like a good omen.

One morning Djemo found a bullet hole in his bedroom window, the one looking out on the acacia grove. The bullet had gone through the closed shutters on the outside of the house and through the double panes of glass to pierce the wall over the bed a few inches from the big mirror. Djemo knew that no one would have shot at his house deliberately. He hadn't given anyone reason to hold a grudge, and he wasn't particularly interested in politics, especially not what passed for it these days. All that tactical maneuvering between Serbs and Muslims (there were very few Croats in the

area) struck him as ridiculous.

When you got right down to it, the guys he knew only split up into Muslims and Serbs when they played soccer on the banks of the Sana River on hot summer days. Those games were always organized by Eko, the local cut-up who crooned in the bars of Prijedor. Sometimes the Serbs would win, sometimes the Muslims, but it would always end with beer and a barbecue, masterfully laid out by Eko himself. The drinks and the food, of course, were on the losing team. Over drinks they would sing together, softly, just for the hell of it.

But those were different times. Now the Serbs had taken control of Prijedor overnight, and they were carrying out their usual theatrics. Walking around in army uniforms, they barricaded all the roads leading into town, a practice that came to be called "the log revolution." One morning Serb flags appeared on the town hall, the police station and the Prijedor Hotel. In its long, rich history Prijedor had never experienced a stranger occupation.

Its inhabitants, in panic, kept still. Someone emptied his rounds into the calm.

And this had been going on for over a month. All the Muslims—along with the few Croats who lived there—were dismissed from their jobs. The schools were closed. The Serbs took control of all the radio and television transmitters and began broadcasting their own programs.

The newspapers, except for the Serbian ones, stopped appearing or, at any rate, could no longer be found in town. A media blockade.

"A power struggle," Djemo said to himself. "I'll be fine if things stay like this." Life had been good to him till then: a house, a car, a decent salary, a wife and two sons, one 16, the other just turned 12. Actually, he hadn't been getting along too well with his wife. Djemo burned the candle at both ends a little more than someone of his age, 40, and with a family, should have. He could be seen in bars with a drink in his hand, hanging out with a younger crowd. And with girls, too. That was something his wife, Alma, wasn't the least bit crazy about. But she figured he'd settle down because of the kids.

He hadn't gone out lately. Since last Saturday, when the army had been shooting at Hambarine, a village five or six kilometers from Prijedor, he hadn't gone anywhere. He spent his time just watching movies on TV or playing cards with neighbors and family. "Neighbors and relatives never visit each other this much," he thought. That night, too, he played cards very late at his cousin Fadil's place and ended up staying over, along with the rest of the family.

Fadil's house was right across the street from his own, so he could at least see if anything strange was going on. And that next morning, something did happen.

His cousin Fadil knocked on the door of the room where they were sleeping to tell them the news. The local radio station announced that Prijedor had—as the announcers put it—been attacked by "Muslim extremists." This item was repeated a number of times. And then, every ten minutes, they heard the following message: "Citizens are requested to remain in their homes and apartments for the sake of their own security."

It was sunny, a real spring day, but no good was to come of it. There was tension in the air; a curious apprehension hovered over the city.

With the constant brainwashing that the media was subjecting everyone to, it didn't take much for someone to cross the line and act in ways they might never have imagined. People still kept telling each other nothing ugly would happen around here, but they didn't really believe it themselves. Over there, in Sarajevo, they knew a real war was being waged. "That's a long way off," they used to say. "These are the Kozara mountains; people have been living together here for ages."

But then the streets were full of strangers, armed to the teeth, with all

kinds of insignia on their uniforms. And everyone knew that only the Serbs were armed—down to the last man, including the children. Camouflage fatigues, an automatic rifle with at least two rounds draped across each shoulder, a knife in a leather sheath, a few grenades: all this served as an identity card that established Serb loyalty. Only an armed Serb was a real Serb. All the other Serbs were against them, against their "Serb Republic," which they had already proclaimed although they themselves knew it was just a pipe dream: a state within the internationally recognized state of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The new authorities enforced measures that brought all non-Serbs into a condition of submission and passivity, while their new cadres carried out orders with genuine gusto, distorting normal ties between people beyond the point of absurdity. They embarked on a systematic instigation of hatred toward anything or anyone that could possibly be thought of, or felt to be, "non-Serb." Indiscriminate moral perversion became a mundane matter among Serbs. It was astonishing to witness the transformation of former friends and acquaintances as they turned into crazed servants of the new authority. To these Serbs, Bosnia-Herzegovina was a "former Republic." This became a fixed term in the Serb media, on TV Banja Luka and TV Pale, that factory of lies, as well as in *The Banja Luka Daily Voice* (which later changed its name to *The Serb Voice*).

Djemo knew very well that, in a war such as this one, truth had to be killed first.

The local paper in Prijedor, *The Kozara Herald*, became no less Serb than the rest of the media. Every Friday the newsstands sold fresh lies. The editor of the *Herald*, Mile Mutić, now its sole ruler, along with Živko Ećim and Rade Mutić, his brothers in religious and ideological arms, produced lies in three shifts; even worse, these local scribblers hijacked the once-respected term "journalism." Mile Mutić, an unscrupulous reporter who had never even bothered to put up the façade of a decent guy; a reserve officer in the former Yugoslav People's Army, and God knows what else, broadcast threats to the non-Serb population, calling on them to surrender their weapons, even if they had been acquired legally. No one but Serbs could bear arms: this became his battle cry.

The man, if one could call him that, even had the nerve to write poetry, though there was nothing even remotely poetic about him. He seemed to derive pleasure from the suffering of others, from dishonoring and humiliating

them. Mutić must be considered one of the founding fathers of the deformation of the history of this city and of its people, the people of the Kozara mountains. The only new history that he could envision for his people was the result of the slaughter of other peoples, their total annihilation, and he transformed this "poetic" fantasy into a most absurd reality. In this, of course, he had the complete support of the Serb authorities.

Djemo had never found much to like about Mile. He had done some stints on the local radio station and at the paper, and he'd often seen that huge, bearded creature around the place, the obligatory pipe in his mouth and a leather bag slung over his shoulder. This morning, again, Djemo recognized his voice on the radio. For the umpteenth time that day Mile informed listeners in his hoarse voice that Prijedor had been "attacked by Muslim extremists." He called on citizens not to leave their homes, and he guaranteed, on behalf of the "Emergency Committee," their safety and security. He added that all loyal citizens should put a white flag out where it could easily be seen. Even little kids know what a white flag means.

Djemo drank his usual morning coffee. He lit a cigarette and took a few drags. From time to time he glanced through the window in the direction of his house. He didn't notice anything unusual. Through another window, he looked at the building next to his, about forty yards away, and saw two soldiers armed with rifles on the roof of the building. Every now and then they fired in the direction of Skela, a neighboring residential area. "They can't be trusted," said Djemo, as he moved the table where they were sitting away from the window. Alma had gone over to their place to make breakfast. Soon she came back and put the food on the table. Fadil's wife busied herself around the stove for a while, and then they all sat down for breakfast. The city still thundered with the clatter of automatic weapons.

At some point Fadil looked toward Djemo's place and said: "There are some soldiers around your house." Djemo drew the curtain a little to see two armed men in face masks cautiously approaching the main entrance of the building, crouching down, with their fingers on the trigger. Just then there was a heavy thump on the door. It opened, and Djemo turned to see another soldier exactly like the ones he had just seen across the road. He stood by the door with his rifle aimed right at them. "Got any weapons?" he demanded. They were petrified.

"You deaf or what?" By now he was shouting. "No, brother," Fadil was the first to speak, "we don't." "I'm not your brother, we can't be brothers, *ever*, got that? How about you?" He signaled to Djemo with the tip of his beard. "I don't have any. I never have!" said Djemo.

With a look of utter disbelief, the soldier walked around the room, without lowering his rifle for even a second—it was still aimed at the table and everyone sitting around it. "You've got to get out of here," he said, as if they were under his command, "there's shooting all over the place. We'll take you someplace safer till it stops." Brandishing his rifle, he motioned to Djemo and Fadil to go out. Fadil got up first and, with his arms raised over his head, moved toward the door. The soldier stepped to the side and, still with the end of his rifle, followed Fadil's path. The children were crying. Then Djemo got up. He put his hands behind his head and, in slow motion (he knew what a quick move might mean in such a situation), walked toward the door.

When he got close to the soldier, he paused a second to steal a glance at him. No, he didn't know him. "Don't be scared, Djemo," the soldier told him. "Nothing's going to happen to you," and it seemed to Djemo that he had even tapped him on the shoulder to make his words sound more convincing. Djemo looked hard, but he couldn't recognize a face behind the dark mask. The man's voice didn't sound familiar, either.

He took a few more steps and found himself in the courtyard. There was another soldier there, in a darker uniform, who ordered him and Fadil to keep on going toward the first entrance of the building next to the acacia grove. Those hundred or so yards lasted forever. Fadil was in front, followed by Djemo, who felt the heavy load of a gun barrel on his back, like a burden he was carrying. The air smelled of gun powder, of things burning. Farther away, you could see billowing clouds of black smoke. The old city was in flames. Djemo felt like he had to turn toward his house just once more to see what had become of his family, but he didn't dare. He was afraid it might be the last look of his life.

When they came close to the entrance of the building, the soldier who had been behind them left them, and another one, standing right by the entrance, told them to go into the building. They stumbled down a few steps into the cellar, where they could see several other neighbors, all Muslims. Around the entrance itself other neighbors, Serbs, were milling around with rifles

slung over their shoulders. Pero, who lived in the building and knew everyone, said: "You're safer down here. Don't worry. You'll just stay here until all this blows over." Then he even offered everyone some home-brewed plum brandy. Pero was considered a good neighbor and trusted, even though no one had much choice in the matter at this point. The bottle went from mouth to mouth, just enough to calm everyone's fraying nerves, until it was quickly emptied.

The road to hell as well, Djemo knew, is paved with good intentions. He lit a cigarette, offering the pack to the others, and found a piece of cardboard under the stairs to sit on. "Until all this blows over": Pero's words kept echoing in Djemo's head. But when will it be over? Ten minutes later they brought three more neighbors, Muslims, then two more, then his cousin Fudo with his son Elijan and, along with him, Djemo's own son Ari, who at 16 looked older than his age. Life was just beginning to open up before him. Ari was drowning in his own tears.

"Don't son, it'll all be over in no time. You shouldn't cry, it's a shame. You're a big boy now," Djemo said, hugging him. "I can't help it," sobbed Ari, "they killed...." Djemo felt the blood freeze in his veins. He first thought of his younger son, Deni, then of his wife.... His face turned the color of stone. For a second he thought of running home, but that would have been impossible. "Who..." he barely uttered, "who did they kill?"

Ari couldn't stop sobbing. Finally he turned to his father, hugged him and said: "They killed Lando." He kept crying as he said, "They pumped a whole round into him." Djemo lit another cigarette and blew the smoke out high over everyone. When you're scared, you can dream up anything, he thought to himself. Lando was the true favorite in Djemo's family, a black Doberman, only 18 months old, and a real beauty. Ari often took him out for walks to show him off to his friends or to play in the park. He had taught him to obey commands, to fetch a stick or a ball and to dive into the water with him when they went swimming. The dog had learned to walk over a very narrow bridge across the canal and even to stand on his hind legs and put his front paws on Ari's chest and lick his face.

Djemo had loved that dog, and he was sorry that he had been killed. He tried to comfort his weeping son and promised to get another dog exactly like Lando. But he sensed that a long time would pass before he could make good on the promise.

About twenty people had already gathered under the stairs. You could say "gathered," but "been brought" would be more accurate. Pero, the neighbor, made a list of everyone in the room and asked that all their money and other valuables be handed over to him for safekeeping, promising that everything would be returned once this was over. The people forked them over; they trusted him.

An hour or so later, Pero asked Djemo to come outside, saying that Bato Kovačević, a policeman whom Djemo knew very well, wanted him. Outside, Djemo found himself facing the barrel of an automatic rifle. Bato ordered him to put his hands behind his head and steered him toward a paddy wagon parked at the other end of the building. On his way there, at every entrance of the building, Djemo saw his Serb neighbors, each armed with various weapons. Bato simply dumped him into the back of the wagon and locked the door. Emir, Redzo, Mujo and a few other neighbors were already inside. The wagon had no windows so they didn't know where they were being taken.

After a few minutes on the road, they stopped. The back door was opened, and they got out. They were near the police station. A lot of armed policemen stood around, and masked soldiers in fatigues, too. The smell of burning kerosene filled the air, along with the clatter of a generator. They were ordered to raise their arms and stand against the wall with their legs apart. Then a policeman approached and, cursing them, began to search them, the way they search hardened criminals in the movies. In one of his pockets Djemo had a pack of cigarettes and a lighter, in the other pocket some money and his I.D. card. They took away his lighter and cigarettes and gave him back the money and the I.D. card.

The men stood this way against the wall for about half an hour, taking in the curses along with an occasional blow to the back with a rifle butt. The sun was beating down upon them without mercy. At one point Djemo thought he couldn't take it any more, that he would collapse. He felt dizzy; objects flickered before his eyes; one of his knees buckled, and down he went. A soldier came up to him, hoisted him by the armpit, raised him up and offered him a can of beer. "Have a drink, you'll feel better," he said. Djemo took a couple of swigs and did feel better. He put the can down on a ledge of the wall he was leaning against and thanked the soldier without looking at him. He didn't dare turn around, even though he very much wanted to know who had helped him.

Later they took them upstairs, two by two, and the ones remaining could hear the sounds of beating and cursing and the screaming of those being beaten. The time came for Djemo and another guy to go upstairs. A skinny young man with a big beard walked in front of Djemo up the stairs along which, about a yard from each other, stood heavily armed soldiers and policemen. Djemo saw that each held a club in his hand, rubber, plastic or wood. But they didn't hit him.

When they got to the door leading to the canteen, one of the policemen told Djemo to wait while he took the other guy inside. The door was left ajar. Djemo could see everything. They began hitting the guy, using clubs, feet, fists and whatever else they could find. "You motherfucker," they cursed, pounding on him without letup. "We're protecting you, you and your family, and you shoot at us. You had a gunner's nest on top of your house." And they beat him harder.

The man swore by his very eyes, by all that was dear to him, by his children, that he had no weapons, neither he nor anyone else in the family, but that didn't help him at all; they kept on clobbering him. A trail of blood began trickling down from above his right eye. Eventually they threw him out the door, where Djemo stood mutely; and the uniformed men on the stairs hit the poor guy as they dragged him downstairs. Then Djemo's turn came.

One of the soldiers motioned him in. He took two or three steps, just enough to find himself surrounded by all those raging beasts. He was taken aback when, instead of a beating, he got a request: "And now tell us all you know about the attack and where you were while it was going on." Djemo thought hard. What should he say? That he didn't know a thing? They wouldn't believe that he'd only heard about the attack on the radio. But there wasn't enough time to think things through. "Since the shooting at Hambarine," he said, "I haven't been away from my family, from my house. I listened to the instructions given out by the Emergency Committee on the radio and did everything they said until the soldiers came and brought me here"—all of this as if in a single breath. He pulled his head in toward his shoulders a little, waiting for their reaction. A powerful fear that he had never felt before coursed throughout his entire body.

"This one's loyal," a voice behind him could be heard. "I know him. He worked at the radio station." And then the owner of that voice of salvation came to

face him. Djemo didn't know him, but he understood that the few emblems on his epaulets made him the master of the present situation.

"And do you know which of your neighbors had weapons?" he asked. "Believe me, I don't," said Djemo, addressing only the one with the emblems on his epaulets. "I was never interested in what my neighbors had or didn't have or what they did. I didn't even know a lot of them." He was aware of the absolute hopelessness of his position. "Take him away," replied the commander as he sat down on the edge of the table by the window, sneering at Djemo. He wasn't even beaten by those standing outside, the ones with the clubs. It was as if they had gotten a secret signal.

At the time, Djemo had no idea that he had passed only the first gate of hell.

Later they loaded them onto a bus, from which there waved a big Serbian flag mounted on one of the side-mirrors. Three soldiers sat in the front seats facing them. The bus started moving. First they drove straight to the underpass, then right, then left toward the cellulose and paper factory, before turning down the street running along the banks of the Sana River. Djemo looked at the Old City. Tongues of flame rose high above the burning roofs. Dense whorls of smoke gathered into huge black clouds. The Old City, that island surrounded by the Sana and the Berek, looked like an enormous torch. "That's how all your houses will burn," said one of the soldiers.

Djemo just kept quiet, impotently gritting his teeth and sighing in despair, feeling almost unbearably humiliated. It seemed to him then that he would remember this image of the Old City in flames until his dying day. That part of the city was the source of many sweet memories. He fell in love for the first time right there, on the banks of the Berek, and it was there that he smoked his first cigarette. The dances held on the stage of the open-air theater were unforgettable, not only for the people of Prijedor but for those from other places who came to spend the summer. And swimming at night in the Sana ...

Memories kept reeling as pressure gripped his throat. And the misery flowed from his eyes. His body felt weighed down by helplessness and humiliation. His hand motioned toward his pocket for a cigarette, but he remembered that his cigarettes had been taken away at the police station.

Their heads bent down, their eyes bereft of hope, the prisoners lurched forward as the bus led them into the

unknown. The Serb soldiers in the front of the bus occasionally greeted passersby with three raised fingers in the traditional Serb salute; they also sang some strange, unintelligible songs. As they passed, a group of villagers in fatigues and muddy boots signaled the bus to stop. They asked the escorting soldiers to hand over the prisoners. "Those are *Ustasha*," said one, looking over the frightened people in the bus. "They should all be taken care of using the shortcut," he said, holding his hand like a knife across his neck as his face twisted in an eerie grimace of hate. He and his pals were ready to lynch these people on the spot, though they didn't know any of them.

One of the soldiers mumbled something and ordered the driver to shut the door and drive on. Through the window you could see the wide expanse of the plain at the foot of the Kozara mountains, where the turf of tilled soil reaches its highest elevation. Fertile, plowed land, sown with wheat, extending as far as the eye can see. "Who will harvest it?" wondered Djemo. Abandoned cattle, cows, horses, sheep and newborn lambs grazed in the fields. They wandered around scorched houses, as long spits of flame and pillars of smoke soared high above them. In front of the houses, fresh linen still hung on lines stretched across the courtyards. No one had expected such evil.

Only in the Balkans can anything happen any time: these were Ivo Andrić's words, and they came to Djemo's mind. And it happened, the worst that can happen, right there by this mountain range, where history marches in military step. Here people always started from scratch, after every battle, after every plague. People from around here are tough, but it seems that no one loves their patch of sky, their fields and houses and mountains as much.

In earlier wars, the locals had fought to defend Krajina from various enemies, but now ... what exactly was happening now? Who were these mighty warriors who fled their farms, leaving behind half-empty beer bottles, to take up their cannons and machine guns? Once, not so long ago, people had made sacrifices, they had gone without food for the greater good; now they were defying the legal authorities to arm what had once been everyone's army, the Yugoslav People's Army, taking refuge in the five-pointed star and in the attribute "People's." And now that army was pounding them with the very same weapons they had acquired to defend themselves from any possible enemy—only the enemy, it turned out, had been

living right here, next door or down the street. Until just yesterday they had shared everything, drinking coffee together, going to parties and funerals together, visiting each other, marrying each other, but now ...

"Where the People's Army marches," the old song goes. Djemo would have added: "... is a land where grass no longer grows." These were strange times. Bosnia trembled as if it had been hit by a powerful earthquake. But an earthquake comes and goes. This thing just kept on going.

Was this bus trip the beginning of something still worse? What were those beaten people guilty of? And what about the others, staring at the floor of the bus, their eyes filled with fear? The new regime had nothing to blame them for, other than that their very existence was a reminder of the national, historical character of Muslims and Croats. The new authorities destroyed mosques and churches and even dug up graveyards. Such crimes were well organized and harked back to times we thought we'd forgotten. Irrational hatred flowed from the darkest parts of their souls to stare out from the perpetrators' bloodshot eyes. The reaction of others, more numerous, was silence, fearful silence.

The bus stopped outside the administration building of the iron-ore mine at Omarska, only a few kilometers from the village of the same name. On one side looted cattle grazed in the mowed fields while, across from them, the mining embankments—only days ago they had been busy with workers—lay remote and isolated, seared by the unbearable heat. Two huge buildings stood in the center, separated by a wide asphalt lot with two smaller buildings. The prisoners were ordered to get off the bus with their arms raised over their heads, holding up three fingers on each hand. Two rows of fully armed soldiers opened a path through which they had to walk. Five men were pulled out of the line; the others were taken into one of the big buildings. Among those selected, Djemo recognized Tewfik, a local actor, whom everyone called "Cheap skate." Within minutes a burst of machine-gun fire rang out. "Cheap skate" would never break a leg on stage again.

With every arriving busload, the room got more and more crowded. Djemo's son arrived, along with his cousins Fadil, Mirsad, Fudo, and Fudo's son Elijan. Djemo counted over twenty buses before dark. The pattern repeated itself the next day. In the course of two days, more than 3,000 inhabitants of Prijedor and its outlying villages were arrested in their

homes in these inconceivable raids and brought to the Serb prison at Omarska. Among the prisoners, whose only fault was being Muslim or Croat, were intellectuals, teachers, engineers, police officers, craftsmen. Djemo recognized the mayor of Prijedor, the Honorable Mr. Muhamed Čehajić. How absurd such titles now seemed.

The first four days they weren't given anything to eat. They slept on a tiled floor. Djemo found a cardboard box, broke it up and put it on the floor for himself and his son to use as a bed. The stale air was hard to breathe and dried out their throats. It was on the fifth day that they were ordered to line up for food. The hunger was unbearable. Everyone swarmed to the door, and they were taken away in groups of thirty. Ari was in the third group, Djemo was way back in the tenth. When Djemo's group came up, they were told there was no more food. They went back to their places, writhing in pain. Later, they were given food once a day. A couple of cabbage leaves with a few beans, covered in tepid water, and a piece of bread that seemed to be made of soapsuds: this was their daily fare. They were given only two minutes to eat their portions. Most of the time they were beaten on their way to and from lunch.

The route to lunch wound through a narrow corridor that branched off at the end and led to a staircase on the right. Up there, prisoners were interrogated. Back downstairs, on the left, was the miners' canteen, where they ate. The guards poured water on a worn-out patch of glazed cement to make the corridor more slippery. If a prisoner fell, they would pounce on him like famished beasts at the sight of a carcass. Using whips made of thick electric cable, they beat them all the way up the stairs for the inevitable interrogation or simply to finish the job they had already started.

In the presence of interrogators, inspectors from the Prijedor police station, they struck them with shoes, brass knuckles, iron rods and God knows what else. They wished to force admissions of guilt and signed, trumped-up confessions. Usually they got prisoners to admit that they had taken part in attacks on Prijedor, or carried arms, or been found with lists of Serbs to be liquidated by Muslims. These false accounts were taken as evidence warranting the use of force and torture. The goal was clear: to eliminate any hope of survival in each man.

A young doctor from Kozarać, Mensur Kusuran, was forced to confess that he had stolen medicine from the clinic

where he worked, that he hid the medicine in his cellar and smuggled it to Muslims. Mensur, of course, had no clue as to what any of this was about. He swore that he had never taken a single dose of medicine from the clinic, but to no avail. He was forced to sign a confession that sealed his fate. And then Mensur remembered that his house had no cellar. The interrogators just laughed and told the guard to take him away. Of the many doctors who passed through Omarska, Mensur is the only one known to have survived the horrors of this camp.

In another case, Eso Mehmedagić, a prominent public figure from Prijedor, was accused of being a sniper. It didn't matter that everyone knew that Eso was afflicted with progressive blindness. He couldn't even walk down the street without help.

There were about 600 prisoners in the area where Djemo was being held. The space wasn't very big; it had once been the miners' locker room. The youngest inmate was just 14, a boy from the nearby village of Bišćani, whose entire family had been killed; the oldest was 74, Uncle Gredelj from Čejrek, another surrounding village. Only a wall separated them from a small garage. It couldn't have been more than about ninety square feet, but it was occupied by 160 people from Kozarać, a small town about ten kilometers from Prijedor with a largely Muslim population. They had put up the longest resistance to the Serbs, so the guards showed them no mercy. These 160 prisoners had been captured somewhere near Benkovac, on Mount Kozara. Most were armed but, unable to mount a stronger resistance, had finally surrendered. Hadn't they heard on the radio that anyone who gave up their weapons would be guaranteed complete safety? They were certainly "safe" in this small space, in their torn clothes, standing barefoot on the concrete floor.

It was horrifying to listen to their screams, their cries for help. The days were hot, the nights were muggy, as they are in these parts. The men would ask the guards for water. Through a broken window high above their heads, the guards tossed in a plastic water canister every now and then, and these parched throats struggled frantically to get at even a few drops of water, a matter of life and death. Since they fought over the canister, more water was spilled than was drunk; then they would turn the empty canister upside down and shake it above their gaping mouths, hoping for the very last drop.

The guards snickered and promised

more water, but only if they sang *chetnik* songs. They had to sing. So you heard songs such as this one:

"You say Serbia's small
Liars one and all
She's not small at all,
Not small at all.
Thrice she went
To battle, from Topola
All the way to Ravna Gora;
And everywhere you go
The loyal guards
Everywhere you go
The loyal guards
Of our General Draža ... "

"Oh Alija, oh Alija,
If we go to battle
It's you I'll kill,
You I'll slaughter,
Just like Miloš once
Got rid of Murat ... "

"See the Turk at her Mosque bowing,
her love to Serbs only swearing ... "

"Louder," the guards would say, "louder, if you want more water." And the chorus of the afflicted rose. "Once more and you'll get water," the guards laughed. "Louder, take it from the top!" The wretched prisoners sang for hours, hoping for at least some relief from the unbearable thirst brought on by the sweltering night.

They took care of their bodily needs using a plastic bucket by the tin door of the garage. When somebody took a leak, the others gathered around to cup their hands and catch the urine, wetting their chapped lips with it and even drinking it. They slept standing up, because there was no space to lie down. Those next to the wall raised their hands high above their heads, keeping them against the wall; paint ran under their palms from the heat and the moisture, trickling down their arms to create hideous reliefs. Once, for no reason at all, a drunken guard let go a burst of machine-gun fire at the garage door. You could hear screams. Word spread that one prisoner was killed and four seriously wounded. The four were taken somewhere, supposedly to a hospital, but nobody has seen them since.

One time Djemo caught sight of those miserable prisoners in the garage through the wide door to his room. A group of about ten was chosen from among them and taken out some forty yards in front of the garage. They were ordered to undress completely. The prisoners began removing their worn, ragged clothes and arranging them in a pile as four guards looked on. The guards were completely drunk, as anyone could tell by the way they moved. As the prisoners stripped, bashfully using their hands to try and cover their nakedness, the guards fixed their cyni-

cal glares upon them even more intently.

One big man, over six feet tall, refused to strip. His beard was long, a sign that he had been imprisoned for quite some time. He simply kept quiet, without moving. He stood with his head bent down, mutely watching. One of the guards came up to him, put the barrel of his rifle to the man's neck and said something to him. The man just stood there, without moving a single part of his body. "The poor guy's going to get it; they'll kill him," said someone from behind, one of those who had shared his lot with Djemo. Djemo didn't turn around; he went on looking without making a sound. Through the upper part of the glass door that separated the inmates from the guards, he watched to see what would happen to this defiant figure and to the other men from Kozarać.

The guard, seeing that the man was steadfast in his intention not to carry out the order, aimed his rifle upwards and fired several shots into the air. Nothing happened. Only some quail in a nearby tree flew away and disappeared from sight. The man stood stubbornly in place without making the slightest movement. While bluish smoke still rose from the barrel, the guard struck the clothed man in the middle of the head with the rifle butt, once and then again, until the man fell. Then the guard handed his rifle to another guard and moved his hand to his belt. A knife flashed in his hand, a long army knife.

He bent down, grabbing hold of the poor guy's hair with his free hand. Another guard joined in, continuously cursing. He, too, had a flashing knife in his hand. The two remaining guards backed off a little and trained their rifles on the group of inmates, observing their every move. The guards with the knives started using them to tear away the man's clothes. The whole thing lasted several seconds. And when they stood up, their clothes were covered with blood, while the air resounded with a long, loud and painful wail. It sent shivers through all who heard it.

Never in all his life was Djemo to see a more horrifying sight. The poor man stood up a little, or tried to stand up, continuing to let out the excruciating screams. He had blood all over him. One of the guards took a water hose from a nearby hydrant and directed the strong jet at the poor prisoner. A mixture of blood and water was flowing down his exhausted, gaunt, naked body as he bent down repeatedly, like a wounded Cyclops, raising his arms above his head, then lowering them toward the jet of water to fend it off, while his throat

issued forth the sound of someone driven to insanity by pain. And then Djemo saw, he saw what had happened clearly, everybody saw it: they had cut off the man's sexual organ and half of his behind.

After that Djemo couldn't remember anything. The shocking sight of that horror momentarily numbed his mind. Only later was he told that the poor man, having just succumbed to the torture, was taken to a garbage container, doused with gasoline and burnt. The others were taken back to the garage.

When the interrogations began, the garage gradually started to empty. Now no more than fifty people were left, living witness of incarceration in the infamous garage. A constant fear gripped the inmates' bones, spreading throughout their very bodies. It took great stoicism to endure the contempt and the torture. Days went by, one day like the one before, and each one even more like the one to follow. Hot, humid days followed by rain, then more rain followed by heat and humidity. Frail bodies became frailer. The pale faces bore an expression of immeasurable suffering, of a devastated sense of human dignity. Movement around the already tight space was reduced to a minimum in order to save energy. Lined up along the wall on their cardboard beds in their ragged sweaters and jackets, the men, who looked as if they had been cemented into this darkness, talked less and less. They believed that in this way they were saving energy, forgetting for a moment the offenses that fate had inflicted upon them. They knew that they had to get to the other side of the abyss. Their beards were growing and their unkempt hair was turning gray.

—Translated by Ammiel Alcalay,
Colleen London and
Midhat Ridjanović

Postscript: In November, 1992, after six months in the Omarska and Manjača camps, Rezak Hukanović was freed in a prisoner exchange. He was taken to Karlovac, in Croatia, where he remained for a month before being sent to Norway through the auspices of the UNHCR. His wife and two sons also managed to escape, and the family was reunited in Oslo.

Hukanović, however, has adamantly refused to be called a refugee. At the first opportunity, in the summer of 1994, he returned to Bosnia. While his wife and children remain in Oslo, Hukanović has been trying to find work in his former profession, as a radio announcer and journalist, in the hopes of once again bringing his family home to Bosnia. •

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Shrinking Shakespeare

Some works in the performing arts are interesting only if done by virtuoso performers. I wouldn't want to hear the Sibelius violin concerto again except with an absolutely dazzling soloist. The film of *Richard III* (United Artists) reminds us that this play is in the same dubious state. If we penetrate the incense that surrounds the very name of the author, the play stands revealed as one of his least rewarding: in character development, moral profundity and quality of verse. ("I had an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;/ I had a husband, till a Richard kill'd him." Etc., etc.) Only a lot of dazzle in the leading role can sustain our attention to the incessant murders and the litanies about them.

Ian McKellen is not the man for the job. Yes, he has long experience in Shakespeare. Yes, this film derives from a theater production that was successful in London and New York. Yes, McKellen is intelligent, skilled and muscularly forceful. What he doesn't have is brilliance; and without that, both the title character and the drama sink into Victor Hugo.

Cutting the play severely, as this screen adaptation does, doesn't reduce the burden. It only makes the play less tolerable because there is less breathing space between the killings, less regard for motive and reaction. Transposing the play to the twentieth century—in this case the 1930s—only raises the question: Why? When Orson Welles did *Julius Caesar* à la Mussolini in 1937, an argument for topicality was advanced (not without strain even then). But *Richard III* in the 1930s? Now? Are we to believe

that this power-greedy homicidal malcontent was a fascist? Nonsense. He had nothing in his head except schemes for personal advancement. The apposition is facile—and reductive of the dangers of fascism.

Richard Locraime, the director, and his colleagues have labored to make the film fast and electric; but they, like McKellen with his cigarettes and pop records, only seem to be sweating with worry. "Shakespeare *isn't* old-fashioned and boring!" they insist and insist, thus getting in the way of whatever impact this sanguinary parade might possibly have.

Only one scene in the play has a kernel of intrinsic interest for me, the wooing of Lady Anne, in which Richard interrupts the funeral procession of her father-in-law—whom he killed after he killed her husband—to court Anne and propose marriage. In the film the scene is played in a morgue, over the corpse (a very different theatrical matter from a

coffin), and the text is more severely sliced than the corpse.

Lady Anne is Kristin Scott Thomas, sufficiently la-de-dah. Some others do well enough with the scraps of their parts that remain: Annette Bening as Queen Elizabeth, Nigel Hawthorne as Clarence, Maggie Smith as the Duchess of York. There's a special poignancy in the case of John Wood as King Edward. He's too old for it now, but what I've seen of Wood on stage in Molière and Stoppard and Schnitzler persuades me that he must have been a scintillating Richard III when he played it in London some years back.

The most famous line in the play, certainly, comes in the battle of Bosworth Field: "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!" How does this motorized film deal with it? By putting Richard in an army vehicle that gets stuck at a crucial moment.

The film of *Othello* (Columbia) is a quite different matter if only because, to put it softly, it derives from a better play. I know of no drama in the whole history of the art, including the Greeks, that surpasses *Othello* in the sense of a force launched at the start that drives unremittingly to the end, gathering speed and power as it goes.

The basic trouble with the film is that, for what it takes to be cinematic reasons, it breaks up this direct course into fragments. Further, the adaptation by Oliver Parker, who also directed, shuns complete scenes, complete at least in shape even if condensed. So what we get is an assemblage, a mosaic, instead of unbroken onrush.

Throughout, Parker scrabbles for "cinematizing" as constantly as Orson Welles did in his *Othello* film, though not as effectively. (Welles had lately seen Eisenstein's *Ivan* and patently used it as a filmic model.) This leads to oddities. For instance, the scene in which Iago swears to help Othello in his quest for revenge is put by Parker in the water—on the beach at the ocean's edge. Yet when he gets the

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Carrington. Not greatly moving but highly intelligent. Emma Thompson as the painter who falls in love with the homosexual Lytton Strachey (Jonathan Pryce). Acutely written, directed, acted. (Reviewed 12/4/95) **Lamerica.** An Italian con man in Albania in the early '90s. Deeply probing, graphic, honest past usual honesty. Gianni Amelio, who made "Stolen Children," proves further that he is an artist of humane significance. (1/29/96) **Nixon.** Oliver Stone, flamboyant and tempestuous as ever, historically idiosyncratic, cinematically overwhelming. Anthony Hopkins heads a perfect cast. (1/22/96) **Sense and Sensibility.** Emma Thompson again (thank heaven)—this time the screenwriter as well as the marvelous leading actress. The result is less for Austen purists than for Thompson purists, but the pleasures are plentiful. (1/8&15/96)—SK

chance really to utilize film's power—to cut away, for instance—he muffs them. The last scene of the play is a directorial headache in the theater. What to do with Othello while he waits for Desdemona to pray? What to do with Emilia's body after she insists on lying down to die next to her dead mistress? How to get Emilia out of the way so that, after Othello stabs himself, he can kiss his wife goodbye without a third person on hand? Parker uses none of the devices of editing to help him with these matters.

Besides the rearrangements of the text, a great deal is cut, though less, I'd say, than of *Richard*. To what is left of his role, Laurence Fishburne gives a committed try. He does well enough in dignity and manly love until the speech that ends "Othello's occupation's gone!", which lacks size. His performance never regains sufficient stature. Whether or not the picture was shot in sequence it's easy to mark this as the place where Fishburne begins to dwindle. (I must note, too, that he is not helped much by his costumes. When he arrives at Cyprus, he seems to be wearing what look like leathern Bermuda shorts.)

What was the casting principle of this film—in terms of accents? Fishburne

speaks good American English. Gabriele Ferzetti (of *L'Avventura* long ago) wrestles with English as the Duke. As for Desdemona, even if we concede that Irene Jacob is much too old for the role and concede, too, that she is insufficiently winning, why a markedly French woman?

Kenneth Branagh's speech doesn't quite fit with the others, but he makes it seem their hard luck. Branagh's Iago isn't near Christopher Plummer's magnificent performance on the stage in 1982; still, he savors neatly what text and space are granted him. The "put money in thy purse" speech to Roderigo is a gem, delicately modeled without actorish maneuvering.

The composer, Charles Mole, had the horrible task of writing a score that, for many of us, would compete with Verdi. Mole comes off honorably, with music of lyric gravity.

Classics Ahead! A recent issue of *Variety* lists twenty-four British films in production. A full third of them are adaptations of famous works—two from Shakespeare, two from Hardy, one from James, one from Austen, one from Conrad and one from Grahame (*The Wind in the Willows*). All aboard for Parnassus ... let's hope. •

only the leotard works), leeching the fragments of their magic and romance, and stringing them together like so many Pop-It beads. I guess that's what the audience wants these days, since they bought it, hook, line and sinker. *Reliquary* opened on a program with *Donizetti Variations*, which happens to contain one of Balanchine's rare overt jokes about music and dance. A soloist runs forward and whips up a storm of showy steps to a plaintive, unadorned horn melody; she hops on her points too enthusiastically and bruises her own toes, learning a lesson about excess. Two intermissions later we were watching the new Martins ballet do the same thing to its score—in earnest, and to bravos.

It was too much for the forces that govern the universe. The next morning, the dance world in New York woke to ringing telephones. A few hours after the curtain calls for *Reliquary*, in his house to which illness had confined him for months, Lincoln Kirstein had died in his sleep.

In his last years Kirstein was a devoted public defender of Martins, of the company's need to keep changing to stay creative and alive. At the State Theater the next evening, Martins stepped before the curtain to apprise the audience of Kirstein's passing. The program that evening was, at least symbolically, a rich and representative one, a timely reminder of what Kirstein had started. It comprised one ballet by Balanchine, one by Robbins, and two by Martins. The Balanchine work was *Serenade*, the first ballet that Balanchine made in America after Kirstein brought him here, the work that we associate with the founding of the Balanchine-Kirstein School of American Ballet. The Robbins piece was *2 & 3 Part Inventions*, his most recent ballet, which he made for students of the school in 1994 and then transferred to the parent company last year. The Martins works were his very first piece of choreography, the pas de deux *Calcium Light Night*, with two prodigious young dancers, Edward Liang and Cara Copeland, making their debuts, and *Reliquary*, which, whether one liked the piece or not, did put Balanchine's name forward for tribute.

Alas, in this second, quasi-memorial performance, *Reliquary* no longer seemed to refer to Balanchine in particular. It had become the reliquary for an age, a spirit, a largeness of thought and action, that was gone; and the fragments that it chose to shore against its ruin did not add up to an elegy. They added up to a bankruptcy. Whatever happens to New York City Ballet from now on, it is going to have to build its

Mindy Aloff on Dance

Reliquaries

Gordon Boelzner, the music director of New York City Ballet's Orchestra and a frequent conductor for company performances, seems to have tried to do a good deed. According to a note in the City Ballet program for *Reliquary*, the new ballet by Peter Martins, it was Boelzner's idea, on hearing "A Reliquary for Igor Stravinsky" by Charles Wuorinen, that the music was suitable for dancing, and he suggested it to Martins. Yet the advance publicity for the work, which was given its premiere at the State Theater on January 4, told a different story. In the papers and on television, Martins and Wuorinen conveyed the impression that the choreographer had heard the score, was immediately moved to dance around the room himself, and decided to make a tribute to Balanchine on the spot.

This romantic exaggeration about the origins of *Reliquary* leaves a nagging doubt about the strength of Martins's sincerity in taking on the project, and it

makes me wonder why Wuorinen would agree to it, apart from the fact that he would be able to conduct the ballet's performances. On several occasions the composer insisted that his "Reliquary for Igor Stravinsky," of all the music he has ever written, is the last thing he would have expected a choreographer to set as a dance. Listening to it, one can understand his reservations. It has a stimulating pulse, yet it is an intimate, almost religious lamentation, characterized by understatement, introspection and deep feeling. The ballet that Martins has made from it, however, seems so wildly different in tone as to make the music sound disordered and senseless.

Martins's choreography is aggressive, frantic, even scalding, and dotted with eye-catching grotesqueries. It is also affectless: it builds a reliquary not for the bones of Balanchine's ballets but out of those bones, forensically slicing and dicing up the leotard works (for Martins, in this homage, Balanchine seems to be

imaginative kingdom from Peter Martins's way of seeing things, which is observant and knowing but painfully narrow. The limits of the kingdom may already be discerned. Martins has now directed the company for thirteen years, and it may well be that he has shown us all that he is going to show us. In any event, he has achieved what he seems to have wanted: apart from its repertory and its sets, New York City Ballet is no longer the company of Balanchine and Kirstein.

This reality is the outcome of a large and lively chain of events. And there is fresh evidence that Balanchine himself incited the course of things. He did this in the way he drew up his will. An essay by Bernard Taper, Balanchine's biographer, which has been published in the last two issues of *Ballet Review* (and will serve as the epilogue to a forthcoming reprint of Taper's *Balanchine*), begins in 1978, when Balanchine, who had never made a will, was recovering from a heart attack and, as Taper puts it, "came to the grudging conclusion that there might be no harm in at least talking with a lawyer." The lawyer was acquainted with a recent revision to the copyright law that brought dance works specifically under its protection, and suggested to Balanchine that he might consider his ballets as assets and specify something about their future.

In making his specifications, Balanchine brought into the open his practical and unsentimental (Taper says "cold-blooded") thinking about the disposition of his repertory. Balanchine died in 1983, and the reading of his will caught even Kirstein by surprise. Neither New York City Ballet nor the School of American Ballet, the institutions that the two men had founded and developed over thirty-five years, is mentioned. About one-quarter of Balanchine's oeuvre (over 400 works) were itemized, and about 70 percent of the rights to them were shared among three legatees: his last wife, the ballerina Tanaquil LeClercq; his longtime intimate, the ballerina Karin von Aroldingen; and his devoted personal assistant, Barbara Horgan, whom he named as his executor. Rights to the remaining ballets listed were distributed among eleven other individuals—and they did not include Peter Martins. (Kirstein offered to give Martins *Orpheus*, one of the two ballets that Balanchine had bequeathed to him. Martins declined it.)

It is Taper's view that, when Balanchine wrote his will, "along with wanting to honor people he cared about and provide for their welfare, he had little confidence that New York City Ballet

could survive his death. . . . In short, I think that one best understands this controversy about the will by remembering that for Balanchine the company and the school mattered principally because of what they enabled him to do. They were his laboratory, and his showcase, too, but never, as far as he was concerned, his memorial." He didn't expect his ballets to be his memorial, either. As he once told Taper, in response to a question about preservation: "For whom? For people to see that I don't even know what they're like, that aren't even born yet? And are my ballets going to be danced by dancers I don't know, that I haven't trained? Those won't really be my ballets."

In the largest sense of "really," Balanchine's words ring true. Ballet is an art of particulars, and memorable performances inevitably depend on who dances what where, who has taught who when. Yet Balanchine's career—fraught with mishaps and disappointments—carries with it the moral that few particulars are irreplaceable, that an accident this morning may turn out to be an inspiration this evening, as long as a communal effort to put on the show is governed by shared values. In a half-century or so, what we call *Symphony in C* or *The Four Temperaments* could suffer many incremental changes, but more important, no one who could tell *why* they were made is likely to be around. (Balanchine: "They will remember the steps and forget the idea.") Still, Balanchine omitted one crucial factor from his thinking: human need. His steps as well as his ideas are now at issue because people—some people, at least—recognize that they are priceless.

Ballet in America today is a stricken ship. The general audience has already bailed out: for the first time in years, perhaps in its history, New York City Ballet has canceled Sunday night performances as well as pre-*Nutcracker* repertory from its winter season. It is the dancers—encouraged or scolded from the sidelines by critics—who are attempting to keep the vessel from disappearing altogether. Balanchine's work continues to be programmed because, when its details and its musical values are observed, it makes dancers feel euphoric and look fascinating. Audiences take notice; but they wouldn't have the chance if the dancers weren't laboring away. One needn't be a ballet connoisseur to recognize when a Balanchine ballet is being danced properly. If it is, you can't take your eyes off the stage. (The problem with attracting young audiences is not that they need to learn how to see; it's getting them into the

theater in the first place.)

As long as ballet companies are directed by ballet dancers, who know how difficult it is to find repertory ballets that can make several casts hold an audience's attention for half an hour or more, Balanchine's work is going to have a theatrical place. And as long as his work is overseen by dancers with whom he worked personally, which for all intents and purposes means the generation between 40 and 70, it is going to have a theatrical life. What his will suggests is that there is no reason to expect this life to be any more vivid or authoritative at New York City Ballet than at any other company.

In his will, Balanchine drew a momentous distinction between his repertory and his company. He appointed no successors; he did not hand over the power to perpetuate him to anyone, though Barbara Horgan, who, with Karin von Aroldingen, founded the Balanchine Trust and currently directs it, has acquired extraordinary power with the agreement of Balanchine's legatees. The Balanchine Trust is a non-profit corporation that oversees the leasing, the staging and the maintenance of Balanchine's ballets. It owns the rights to the ballets of some legatees and, as in the case of Tanaquil LeClercq, represents the rights of others. If a company wants to perform a Balanchine ballet, it must apply to the Trust and subscribe to its decisions about whether the dancers are technically ready for it and so forth. New York City Ballet leases its Balanchine repertory from the Trust, but under special, privileged conditions. According to Taper, those conditions obtain only as long as Peter Martins—in whom members of the Trust have confidence—remains the director of the company.

The Trust, then, has tied the future of the Balanchine repertory at New York City Ballet to one person. It has anointed the successor Balanchine did not. As Taper relates in his biography, Martins went away crestfallen from his last visit to Balanchine in the hospital. "Martins sought . . . Balanchine's official blessing as successor. . . . It was not enough to be the heir apparent; he craved the assurance of being the heir designate. Balanchine would not give him that assurance. 'Look,' Balanchine said, 'nobody is going to hand it to you. You're going to have to take it, you're going to have to fight for it. Not a single person is going to give it to you.' It was clear to Martins that the unspoken end to that last sentence was, 'including me,' and he pursued the matter no further." As Martins also told Taper, Balanchine's

advice to Martins was: "You have to accept the mistakes you're going to make. Make them, and forget them. And one thing more—don't ask anybody else what they would do. Just do yourself what you think is right." Martins seems to have taken the second half of Balanchine's advice literally. In 1996, almost none of Balanchine's muses and leading men are still employed by New York City Ballet, as performers or as teachers.

If, today, a dancer wishes to be coached by a ballet's original executant, he or she must go outside the New York City Ballet to re-study most roles. As a result, many Balanchine ballets have suffered a considerable loss of luster at the New York State Theater. Is it too late for Martins to reconsider his point of view, to "accept his mistakes" and move on? Would audiences notice if he did? Yes, they would, if they had the chance to make direct comparisons between how New York City Ballet dances the ballets and how various companies around the country perform them.

The New York City Ballet has wonderful dancers and peerless resources. It can certainly brook competition; yet over the past five years out-of-town companies with extensive Balanchine repertoires have not performed in New York or have brought only an austere limited Balanchine selection. Even the Dance Theatre of Harlem, which is based in New York and was founded with the assistance of Balanchine and Kirstein, rarely offers Balanchine in its hometown. This past November, the San Francisco Ballet enjoyed a successful New York season at City Center. Its repertoire included one Balanchine ballet, *Stravinsky Violin Concerto*, whose staging is attributed to Karin von Aroldingen and Bart Cook. The dancers, overseen by San Francisco's director Helgi Tomasson, are astonishingly well trained; most of them look better than their City Ballet counterparts in this work.

The San Francisco performance was a tribute to a certain kind of chemistry between the staggers of the Trust and the company with whom they were working. Classroom values that matter to Balanchine ballets were, without question, already in place. And we saw many small refinements; San Francisco seems to have fussed over the maintenance of the staging (to the point that a certain colloquial tone, still present at the New York City Ballet and essential to the work, has been mimicked, as if it were an accent, rather than articulated as a birthright). In the *Violin Concerto* sweepstakes of the moment, the laurel goes to San Fran-

cisco—the audience laurel of bravos and cheers.

There is an urgent case to be made for the authority of non-New York City Ballet Balanchine. The catch is that it has to be made nightly, over time. The crucial variables are casting, teaching and coaching. If the dancers are not continuously challenged in company class, for instance, the most sensitive coach in the world is not going to be able to endow them with the placement, turnout and strength that are requisite for Balanchine's choreography, just as the most demanding technical exercises are not going to ensure the requisite musicality. Of the two—technique and musicality—the second is the more precious in the theater. As a group, the dancers of Miami City Ballet, directed by Edward Villella, are less formidable in their technique than the dancers of San Francisco, but Miami's production of *Jewels*, coached by its original ballerinas and performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., last year, is a poetic triumph, and heartbreakingly faithful to the moods and the textures that helped to make the evening-length ballet a hit for Balanchine. It, too, has yet to be seen in New York.

Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle, another company with an important Bal-

anchine repertory, is scheduled to perform this year at the Kennedy Center and, for the first time in more than a decade, in New York, at City Center. Last year, as part of her work for the Balanchine Trust, Suzanne Farrell visited Pacific Northwest to stage *Mozartiana*, Balanchine's 1981 suite to Tchaikovsky's orchestrations of Mozart pieces. I happened to be present at some of those rehearsals, and they were riveting; understated yet intense, and buoyed by a spirit of kinetic adventure.

Farrell had already taught the steps; she was concentrating here on technical refinements and on tone. The soloists learned that at various points they could choose among alternative actions and that they weren't obligated to match some passages of choreography to the music exactly the same way at every performance. One man, who was cast in the Mozartean "Gigue," was filled in on some of the elements that made the role ironic. Farrell's coaching was quite physical. She danced out her explanations, for men as well as for women, and she kept track of the second and third casts as well as the first, sometimes asking them to rehearse their parts directly in front of her, rather than shadowing the first cast at the back of the room. The ballerina role of *Mozartiana* is one of the

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plum roles that Balanchine made for Farrell, yet in no way did she convey the impression that she "owned" it. In transmitting the work, she functioned as the instrument through which it passed. Her rehearsal was a dynamic laboratory of ego-less dedication.

The seriousness that pervaded this project did not originate with her alone. It also spread from the top of Pacific Northwest's organizational chart. Franca Russell and Kent Stowell, the company's codirectors and leading teachers (Stowell is also its resident choreographer), invited Farrell to stage the ballet and secured the company's complete cooperation. Russell and Stowell are former Balanchine dancers—they met and married while performing with New York City Ballet in the 1960s—and since they took over the leadership of Pacific Northwest some twenty years ago they have made Balanchine the core of the repertory, acquiring twenty-five of his works. They do not consider theirs a "Balanchine company"; the repertory contains ballets by a large roster of choreographers, and company class does not offer pure Balanchine technique. Yet they recognize that Balanchine ballets are the standard of excellence by which the company will be judged, and they value them as sources of joy to dancers and to audiences.

Russell mounted eighteen of those ballets herself, and confidently, since her career as a Balanchine stager began decades ago, under his close tutelage. During the rehearsals for *Mozartiana*, however, she put aside her own authority and became a student again, learning all the ballet's roles at the back of the studio as Farrell taught and coached them. It was Russell's evident pleasure—as well as her official responsibility as the person who would maintain the work in Farrell's absence—to get inside the choreography and see what made it tick. "Teaching a Balanchine ballet to someone who doesn't know it is like unwrapping a gift," she said during a rehearsal break. "It offers delight that dancers feel in their bodies." She went on to say that the *Mozartiana* variations are not like any other Balanchine choreography she knows. "Well, the 'Gigue' is familiar. But the others don't go the way you think they will, and their timing is tricky. He must have felt freer."

Russell is speaking here about an aspect of the choreography that only a longtime Balanchine dancer (or someone who studies the ballet repeatedly on videotape) would be likely to notice. During the decades in which he worked in America, Balanchine developed certain patterns of thinking, and to his

dancers and his fans they became as recognizable as a thumbprint. The way and the pace at which a phrase in a dance variation would change direction, or the number of times a step might be repeated with variations, or the syncopation of the movement, could sometimes be guessed in advance by certain performers as he was working with them. In the case of this last setting of *Mozartiana* (Balanchine had used the music a number of times before), the predictable patterns are submerged or absent, especially in the solos for the ballerina. Any element of the grammar or vocabulary might lead to any other element. And yet, as with Terpsichore's solo in *Apollo*, which has a similar quality of complete unpredictability, one senses a larger coherence.

Russell's ability to perceive *Mozartiana*'s structural innovations while she was learning the ballet and then immediately to place them within the Balanchine canon testifies to her own authority as a curator of his repertory. Her staging of *Agon* (with the assistance of Peter Frame) for Pacific Northwest last year possesses a detail, a clarity and an inevitability that are unmatched by New York City Ballet. Even Miami City Ballet's bold and focused production, staged recently by Farrell himself, does not quite compare with Seattle's. Miami's *Agon* ballerina, Myrna Kamara, a former member of New York City Ballet's corps, was voluptuous under Farrell's direction, yet Pacific Northwest's production is more balanced as a whole.

Russell was a member of *Agon*'s original cast; she knows the ballet intimately, from the ground up. Farrell, whose crystallizing performances in its principal role, under Balanchine's scrutiny, confer on her an insider's knowledge of a different sort, knows it, too—from the heights down. In the abstract, of course, one needn't make a choice among these stagings. Unless one is able to travel around the country to see them, however, a balletgoer (or a producer) has no sense of what the possibilities can be for excellence in a Balanchine production. Ballet is a repertory art that thrives on close comparisons—among productions, among casts, among steps. The core ballet audience that returns to the theater consists of individuals who, like the core opera audience, feel they have real choices that will stimulate them to understand more. We should not have to choose among *Agons* any more than we have to choose among *Swan Lakes*.

I asked Russell how she would characterize Farrell as a Balanchine stager, and her answer followed without the slightest

delay. "I've learned a thousand times more about his ballets by staging them than I ever did by dancing them," she said, "but Suzanne imitates his thinking in a way I never would. She was with him so much. She knows another layer of meaning to all this." By way of explanation, Russell cited some of Farrell's remarks from the rehearsal—a play on the words "acceleration" and "accentuation" was one; an observation that the "z" of Mozart's name is mirrored in the zig-zagging patterns of the choreography was another. Farrell's asides may seem like grace notes, but collectively, in a concentrated period, they create a climate in which the imagination is sparked by coincidental match-ups among small details. The coincidences are not willed; they are found. The implicit message is that if one is alive to the moment, one is dancing—a comforting idea that encourages the performer to take risks within a meticulously controlled environment.

We are only beginning to appreciate the extent of that control. This past fall the Society of Dance History Scholars published the most informative analysis of Balanchine's teaching of point work to appear in print. The monograph by Suki Schorer, a member of the faculty of the School of American Ballet, discusses his ideas on the way the dancer's toes should be oriented within the blocked shoe: this is micromanaged science. It is no accident that the author of the central essay on Balanchine's approach to technique should be herself a stager of high caliber. (The hallmarks of Schorer's Balanchine stagings for the annual School of American Ballet workshop are their energy and their charm; the technique is invisible.) Russell, too, recalled Balanchine's controlling nature as a stage director. "He left nothing to chance," she said. "He fussed over everything he could get his hands on. Of course, he wasn't patient, but he could mask it sometimes. The New York City Ballet represented a point of view, and it wasn't fractured."

Farrell goes a step further. Her rehearsal left the distinct impression that all this rational control served to showcase the pure play of the nervous system and the unconscious—of the choreographer and the dancers. Given the ugly publicity that surrounded the firing of Farrell from City Ballet a couple of years ago, the fact that New York has been denied any glimpse of Farrell's Balanchine has led to unflattering speculation about City Ballet's possible role in keeping out-of-town Balanchine productions out of Manhattan. The best thing for everyone would be if a visionary

patron or producer could bring a two-week run to New York soon of the "Farrell Stages Balanchine" event that the Kennedy Center produced for one week this past October. The last four of its seven performances, which I saw among sold-out and enthusiastic houses, kept building in excitement, and the final one was electrifying.

In the course of seven Balanchine ballets, distributed over two programs, Farrell pulled off coup after coup. Her corps and some of her soloists were drawn from the Washington Ballet, which is not trained in Balanchine technique. With Victoria Simon of the Trust (Simon set the steps for many roles), Farrell had only five weeks to work with her dancers, weeks which were interrupted by company rehearsals for the Washington Ballet's own regular season. Her principals were drawn from several other companies in the United States and abroad. They included Maria Calegari, Helène Alexopoulos, and Peter Boal—all currently or formerly of New York City Ballet—as well as American Ballet Theater's Susan Jaffe, a former School of American Ballet student; and they also included former Kirov dancer Galina Pankova, Marie-Christine Mouis of the Paris Opéra Ballet and the Boston Ballet, and the husband-and-wife couple Tamas Detrich and Marion Jäger, of the Stuttgart Ballet.

By implication, Farrell was asking the audience to evaluate different aspects of her abilities. She was trusting that at least a portion of the audience would know these principals from their home contexts and so would be able to discern her effect on them. And what an effect she had. Mouis, whom I have seen in Boston, was cast in Farrell's own role for a performance of *Chaconne*; she didn't begin to approach Farrell, but she was operating four or five levels above herself. (She looked terrified on stage, like someone riding a bicycle who never thought she could ride a bicycle.) Pankova, a brilliant Kirov dancer, performed the ballerina role in *Scotch Symphony*, a part she first danced under Farrell's direction when Farrell set the ballet on the Kirov in 1989. With the Kirov, she was promising. In Washington, Farrell apparently encouraged her to pursue an ardent reading of the Sylph's role—more ardent than Balanchine himself inspired (or countenanced) in his ballerinas. Pankova was iconoclastic, yet still within the bounds of the choreography; and she created a sensation. Boal and Alexopoulos, both featured in several ballets, looked better than they have with the City Ballet during the last two years: more spirited,

more daring, more musical.

Jaffe, especially in the ballerina role of *Mozartiana*, was a revelation, dancing with a warmth, a musical confidence and an attention to details of head and *port de bras* that I have never seen her produce more than fleetingly in her ABT career. And in the case of Calegari, one of Balanchine's greatest ballerinas of the 1970s and '80s, one felt that Farrell's achievement was in knowing what roles to put her in and then how to get out of the way. As the ballerina in *Monumentum pro Gesualdo* and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, Calegari turned in performances that were chillingly definitive, in some respects as great as Farrell's own. And in *Tzigane*, a ballet so closely associated with Farrell's particular qualities that it would seem untransferrable (at the Balanchine Celebration in 1993, Darci Kistler looked lost in it), Calegari's performance strongly suggested that with the right ballerina, even *Tzigane* could live again.

Farrell owed some of her achievement to her chosen conductor, Ron Matson of Cincinnati Ballet, who worked magic to pull together musical support in the pit with hair-raisingly little rehearsal. Her interaction with the open-minded if harried dancers of the Washington Ballet was palpable: these dancers were per-

forming *Scotch Symphony* and the "Menuet" section of *Mozartiana* with more musical precision and more gestural detail than they have enjoyed at City Ballet in over a decade. Washington's Shawn Mahoney, who danced *Mozartiana's* "Gigue," and Hagop Kharatian, who partnered Calegari in *Monumentum/Movements*, were true finds—dancers who would have looked right in the parts dancing with almost any company, dancers who needn't be handicapped in order to be praised.

What effect might this solitary week of performances have on the darkening age of ballet in New York? There are those who think, plausibly, that it may have been an event for the people who were there, but in the big picture it's going to sink away, and not go down in the history books as we would like to see the history books written. Yet surely there is still a chance. Most of the ballet that has been chronicled by the historians would never have gotten on the boards if the artists involved with its production had been realists only. Why couldn't Farrell's week in Washington go down in the history books? It depends on whom accident, or the dance world, casts to tell the full story—whose end, as Lincoln Kirstein always insisted, is not yet in sight. •

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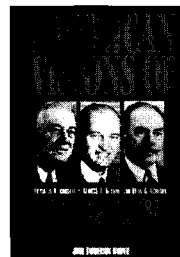
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The roots of Britain's identity crisis.

The Europeans

BY ANDREW SULLIVAN

I.

The journey from London's Waterloo station to the Gare du Nord in Paris now takes the same amount of time it takes to go from Washington to New York. The train itself is a curious blend of the two countries it serves: small glass goblets of champagne are served with scones and clotted cream; British tabloids are stacked outside French automatic restrooms. You hardly notice the twenty minutes beneath the stretch of water that has probably had as much psychological and military significance as any stretch of water in history. Still, some differences linger. The train chortles fitfully in Kent, but after Calais the rails straighten, poplars blur in the distance, and a Frenchman announces that the train has reached its maximum speed—about 200 miles an hour. If you're English, your mind is likely to fill with pride and embarrassment. Pride, because you're glad to have been born in a country which places the sensibilities of a few suburbanites over the interests of rational train-travel; embarrassment, because this very prosaism, this littleness and restraint, suggests a fear of the future beautifully symbolized by those twists of rail track, which force you to stall and peer into the condensation-drenched windows of the Home Counties. Dampness and smallness everywhere.

And yet, you remind yourself, the chunnel *was* built. It does finally exist: a recognition, however reluctant, of the need for a future; a sign, perhaps, that the British national identity crisis that has persisted now for more than half a century might have some kind of resolution. Perched between a land-mass to which they feel few bonds and an ocean which increasingly yawns with indifference, the British increasingly accept that they have, essentially, two options: Europe or America. Both have some appeal. The cultural, linguistic and political closeness of the Anglo-Americans, tested for decades, is not something the British wish to abandon lightly. But the sheer proximity of Europe, and its economic entanglement with Britain, makes the European connection irresistible.

For forty-five years, the practical necessity to choose between Europe and America was masked by the cold war. Britain found an awkward if defensible role as America's chief proxy in the North Atlantic, reassuring much of Western Europe that the Americans remained engaged. Yes, this caused problems: a large part of Britain's European isolation was rooted in French suspicion of the Anglo-Saxon bond, and much of Britain's elite, on right and left, chafed at subservience to American interests. But the ambivalence also had its uses. It allowed the right to keep the Europeans and the Communists at bay and it gave the left a convenient

The Path to Power

by Margaret Thatcher
(Harper Collins, 656 pp., \$30)

Churchill's Grand Alliance: The Anglo-American Special Relationship 1940-1957

by John Charmley
(Harcourt Brace, 427 pp., \$26)

object of detestation to mask their deepening intellectual bankruptcy. And at the same time, the alliance put off the task of finding a more definitive role for the country on its own.

But suddenly the cold war is over; and the emptiness of Britain's non-destiny is more and more pressing. The Americans are withdrawing; the Europeans are consolidating; the island is being forced into a decision it has long deferred. It is no surprise then, perhaps, that this should be the moment for historical revisionists to make their appearance. In moments of impasse, there is often a need to conceive of the past, and therefore of the future, in a way that banishes the predicament of the present. Somewhere in their hearts, the English are longing to be told that there was nothing inevitable about their agonizing Hobson's choice; that another, more glorious choice was once available; may even still be available. This is where the historian John Charmley fits in. His work provides a scapegoat for Britain's current identity crisis. And that scapegoat, believe it or not, is Winston Churchill.

II.

In his previous book, *Churchill: The End of Glory*, and in his new book, *Churchill's Grand Alliance*, Charmley makes a dramatic and intellectually invigorating assertion. He argues, essentially, that Chamberlain was right: that Britain's interests in the 1930s and 1940s were best served by the appeasement of Germany, the avoidance of costly conflict and the preservation of its reserves and its empire. Hitler's primary concern was with dominating Eastern Europe and defeating the Soviet Union; he would have been content, Charmley suggests, to leave Britain alone. But the other part of Charmley's argument is even more arresting: by avoiding war with Germany, he claims, Britain would have avoided falling into the hands of the Americans, who shrewdly used the Second World War as a way to divest Britain of empire, construct a new world order on America's terms and bankrupt the old colonial master in the postwar period.

The shock of Charmley's book is its amorality. He draws a veil over moral considerations in the conflict and restricts himself to considerations of national self-interest. And so he sees an essential moral analogy, so far as British realpolitik is concerned, between Roosevelt's America and Hitler's Germany. A photo caption in the book says it all. Under a picture of U.S. Ambassador to Britain Joseph Kennedy and Churchill, Charmley writes: "Two appeasers, 1940. Ambassador Kennedy wanted to appease Hitler, Prime Minister Churchill wanted to appease Roosevelt."

The merits of Charmley's book are the merits of all serious revisionist history: the book forces the reader to rethink assumptions, even in the face of its moral obtuseness. Perhaps its most convincing element is its portrayal of the wiliness of Roosevelt, who shrewdly pursued America's national interest even when it conflicted with Britain's. And Charmley's bleak recognition of the way in which Britain was indeed finished by the war is a useful reminder of the reasons for the swiftness of Britain's decline, from world behemoth to European province. Even in such a titanic moral struggle, tensions between national allies are inevitable.

And yet, even by the standards of realpolitik, Charmley fails to convince, and so calls into question the very motive for such a book. The appeasement of Nazi Germany was never a very coherent option for Britain. Even at the height of imperial power, Britain was always leery of a single state dominating the continent; and the notion that a victorious Nazi Germany would have posed no ultimate threat to Britain and her empire is

ludicrous. So, too, is the alternative that Charmley sees for Britain's postwar future: a more gradual dissolution of empire and a more equal relationship between the British empire and the United States. The truth is that, with or without a Second World War, Britain was bound to be eclipsed in the late twentieth century, was bound to be divested of empire.

Britain's economy had been in relative decline since 1900. Its population was relatively tiny. Its empire was becoming a drain rather than a resource. To be sure, the Second World War accelerated the process dramatically, but this does not change the fundamental reality. Indeed, the war may have paradoxically worked to Britain's advantage. The empire was abandoned with minimal trauma; the postwar world dominated by liberal trade organizations and the American military may have served British industrial interests well; and Britain was militarily protected from the new totalitarian threat—Soviet Russia—by the “nuclear umbrella” of the United States.

Charmley portrays Churchill as a romantic dupe in this process, having few war aims but victory, and therefore all too willing to acquiesce in American designs. But Churchill understood that identifying Britain's interests with America's in the 1940s was a shrewd sort of decline management. What better way to sustain world influence than to merge with the new world power? In some ways, Britain survived the next fifty years in better shape than its rivals: a brutalized Russia, a divided Germany, an isolated France. Her poor economic performance was not Churchill's (nor America's) fault, nor would it have been rectified by the cushion of imperial reserves. Indeed, those reserves might in fact have helped delay Britain's encounter with market forces even longer, and so perpetuated its decline.

Besides, as Richard Lamb observes in a recent book based on newly released papers of the Macmillan government, Churchill balanced his Americanophilia with a pragmatic European policy. He believed in the moral destiny of Europe, which is why he felt so strongly about Hitler's evil inversion of it. It was Churchill who conceived of a federal Europe, before Jean Monnet. In 1947, in a speech in the Albert Hall in London, he called for European unity and began the process, which culminated in May, 1948, with the launching of the European Movement. It was Churchill who in May 1950 called for “the immediate creation of a European army under a united command”; and it was Churchill who, a short time later, declared, “Without hesitation

we are prepared to consider and, if convinced, to accept the abrogation of national sovereignty provided we are satisfied with the conditions and safeguards ... national sovereignty is not inviolable.”

This was Churchill in opposition. In government, he adopted the balancing act that has typified most postwar British governments. When he returned to power as prime minister in 1951, he declined to take part in the Schumann Plan, a plan named after the French foreign minister in which the coal and steel resources of France and Germany were to be pooled with those of any other European country that wished to subscribe to the arrangement, under the aegis of a supranational authority. Churchill rejected it because he feared the plan's potential damage to British sovereignty. Anthony Eden, Churchill's foreign secretary, in a memo to all British ambassadors in December 1951, summarized what was to become the eternal British position: “We want a united Europe ... it is only when plans for a united Europe take a federal form that we cannot ourselves take part.” Churchill later confirmed, in an archetypal description of Britain's future attitude, that, as far as the Schumann Plan was concerned, Britain would be “with it though not of it.”

Charmley's Churchill is not this canny realist, who saw America and Europe as forming the contradictory poles of Britain's future, who calculated national interest but believed that the betrayal of its moral principles would have wounded Britain more than a thousand lend-leases. This, surely, was what lurked behind Churchill's great flourish at the height of the Battle of Britain: “if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men would still say: ‘This was their finest hour.’” He knew, as he said those words, that the empire was largely doomed. But the real irony of Churchill's phrase is that, if it helped make British survival possible, it also made the British future almost intolerable. Once the defeat of Hitler's Germany was accomplished, the British had to return to the humble task of reconstruction, knowing, as a part of their national myth, that their best years were behind them.

III.

Charmley is right, then, about one thing: the choice of an American alliance in the Second World War was a decisive moment for Britain. But Charmley is wrong about the alternative. The

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choice turned out to be not America or Empire, but America or Europe. Chamberlain vs. Churchill: this was essentially a choice between the acceptance of Germany or the acceptance of America. Macmillan vs. Eden: this was the 1950s version of the drama, with Eden allying himself with the French in Suez and Macmillan concluding that the American connection was a more fundamental interest. (It was Macmillan's search for an American-built nuclear deterrent that ultimately convinced de Gaulle to keep the British out of the European Community in the early 1960s.) Heathism vs. Thatcherism: the great Tory schism of the last two decades, was also a choice between Europeanism and Americanophilia.

Edward Heath was Harold Macmillan's chief negotiator for entry into the EEC and later brought Britain into the Community in 1971, as prime minister. Viscerally, emotionally and intellectually, Thatcher and her coterie saw the European connection as a device to sever America from the continent, and they resisted it, as far as they could. And now, in the 1990s, this schism has brought the Conservative Party to a moment of self-destruction as bitter as the fight over agricultural protectionism in the nineteenth century.

In some ways, even the great economic divisions of the last fifty years can be seen as a subset of this question of national identity and allegiance. It is no accident that Macmillan and Thatcher, the two most Atlanticist prime ministers of the period, favored (in differing degrees) market liberalization. Or that both were prime ministers at periods of maximum American penetration of British culture, the 1950s and the 1980s. Harold Wilson and Edward Heath, by contrast, favored more statist economics, which reflected the British tradition of trade union power and the welfare state, but also the social democratic impulses of the continent. Now that the European Union claims the authority to intervene in domestic social policy—through the "Social Charter," which mandates a minimum wage and other market buffers—the political link between European federalism and what's

left of social democracy, on the one hand, and America and market liberalism, on the other, has been sharpened. Thatcherites attack Europe because they see it as a plot to reimpose socialism on Britain; many Labourites and Disraelian "one nation" Tories warm to the European Union for precisely the same reasons.

But the really remarkable thing, perhaps, is how British politicians in the last fifty years have remained staunchly committed, once in office, to finding a Churchillian middle. Macmillan tried and failed to join the Community even as he

postwar period. And it was she who brought Britain into the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1989, even though she simultaneously attempted to undermine her own policy.

John Major, the Stanley Baldwin of his time, has remained true to this policy of ambiguity. He was elected leader of the Tory Party precisely because Thatcher seemed on the verge of a deep break with Britain's European partners, a break that had caused the resignation of several critical cabinet members and a damaging split in Tory ranks. Major was the conciliatory figure: acceptable

to Thatcherites but no Europhile. And his policy has been fanatically moderate. Major signed the Maastricht Treaty in 1991, which committed Britain to closer exchange rate parity with the Deutschmark, ceded new powers to the European Court (which in many areas is now the highest court in Britain) and declared a bid for "ever deeper union" between member states of the EC. At the same time Major secured an exception for Britain in the social charter, allowing Britain to maintain lower labor costs and fewer workplace entitlements than its European partners, and an "opt-out" opportunity at the final stage of European monetary union, which is now optimistically scheduled for 1999. Even this was too pro-European for some of his party, who prompted his political near-death experience last June.

The only figure in postwar Britain for whom there seemed to be no

dilemma was Edward Heath, the prime minister who, as time goes by, seems one of the most curious postwar British politicians. He was always grandly in favor of a federal Europe, of subsuming Britain into a larger European entity and moving it out of the American orbit. His views were formed early by watching de Gaulle scuttle his plans for British entry, and culminated in his single-handed, supine negotiations for British entry in 1971. Heath, at least, was consistent. As he told the assembled leaders of the five states who had not vetoed Britain's entry in 1963, "We in Britain are not going to turn our backs on the mainland of Europe, or on the coun-



MARGARET THATCHER BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

cozied up to Kennedy. Wilson was far more Atlanticist in practice than in rhetoric. He delayed any ultimate decision on Europe for fear of dividing his party. When the issue could not be avoided any longer, he deployed the first and last British referendum on Europe in 1975, as a way to keep Labour (fearful of a Euro-capitalist takeover) in some kind of coherent shape. Even Thatcher, for all her Americanism, campaigned for entry into the EEC in 1975, presided over the transition to a single market in 1992 and signed the Single Europe Act, which was the deepest and most far-reaching abrogation of sovereignty of the

tries of the Community. We are a part of Europe by geography, tradition, history, culture and civilization." It was said with conviction, and it was greeted with tears by his European listeners. He was the only prime minister (apart, perhaps, from James Callaghan) who was genuinely liked by all his European peers. In this, as in many other ways, he could not have been more different than his immediate successor as Tory leader.

IV.

You can pore through Margaret Thatcher's account of her childhood and find few references to, or interest in, Europe. There are brooding mentions of the continent that is busy nurturing fascism in the 1930s. (There is also a curious eagerness to exculpate some Tory appeasers: "the Left had been highly successful in tarring the Right with appeasement, most notably in Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club, the so-called 'yellow books.'") On the whole, though, the atmosphere is oppressively English. The world of young Margaret Roberts, formed by the austere figure of her convenience-store owner father, was one in which foreigners were at bay. She was brought up on *Bibby's Annual*, a compendium of uplifting religious and literary passages produced by a Liverpool food manufacturer in 1936, and the *Oxford Book of English Verse*. This was an Anglocentric world. Consider Thatcher's account of her first visit to London:

I saw people from foreign countries, some in the traditional native dress of India and Africa. The sheer volume of traffic and pedestrians was exhilarating; they seemed to generate a sort of electricity. London's buildings were impressive for another reason; begrimed with soot, they had a dark imposing magnificence which constantly reminded me that I was at the centre of the world.

The war intensified two things in the mind of Margaret Roberts: an aversion to the continent and a sympathy for the Jews. London was not the center of Europe, it was the center of the world. Europe was an encumbrance to that centrality, an interference in Britain's mission, and unrelated to Roberts's conception of the future. (That conception seems to have been formed in part by Hollywood: "On my visits to the cinema I roamed to the most fabulous realms of the imagination. It gave me the determination to roam in reality one day.") In comparison to Grantham, her medium-sized hometown in the center of England, which was "a decent place," Europe was a repository of darkness. One of the nuggets of information buried in Thatcher's memoirs is

that the Roberts family sheltered an Austrian Jewish girl, Edith, for the duration of the war, at the initiative of Margaret's sister, Muriel. The Grantham Rotarians came up with the money. Of all the atrocities the Nazis wrought upon Jewry, one thing in particular stuck in young Margaret's mind: "the Jews, she [Edith] said, were being made to scrub the streets."

The other idea that emerged in Thatcher's childhood was classical liberalism. As with most of her ideas, it came from one source: "My father understood that politics has limits—an insight which is all too rare among politicians. His politics would perhaps best be described as 'old-fashioned liberal.' Individual responsibility was his watchword and sound finance his passion. He was an admirer of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*." Reading Thatcher's memoirs, it is impossible not to be struck by her devotion to her father, the way in which she has clearly measured every achievement in her life in his terms and how she has seen him reflected—or not reflected—in almost everyone she encounters. And so her adherence to her father's liberalism is as intense as her absorption in his Englishness. And it continues today. In her latest thundering attack on her successor, on January 11, she described herself as a "liberal": "The kind of conservatism ... I favoured would be best described as 'liberal,' in the old-fashioned sense. And I mean the liberalism of Mr. Gladstone, not of the latter-day collectivists."

Thatcher's model for political style was a blend of her father and her childhood hero "Winston," as she mysteriously refers to him, as if he were some friend of the family, or deity, or both. In political substance, then, she became a Gladstonian; in political style, a Churchillian. Two quintessentially masculine figures. Indeed, women are largely absent from Thatcher's memoir. She is movingly, if briefly, deferent to her mother, but her sister disappears somewhere mid-tome. (There is a delicious novel to be written about the imagined fate of Margaret Thatcher's lost older sister.) Thatcher never appointed another woman to her cabinet, and she transferred her father-worship throughout her life to a variety of male figures: Denis, her husband; a man called Bertie Blatch, her constituency chairman; and Keith Joseph, her brilliant aide-de-camp in the ideological struggles of the mid-1970s. Her awe for her father also permeates her relationship with Ronald Reagan.

The real surprise of the book, however, is its unwitting revelation of Thatcher's ideological suppleness. After her childhood, liberalism and nationalism,

always in the background, flicker only intermittently for the next forty or so years. Oxford was about chemistry and student politics. Thatcher was president of the Oxford University Conservative Association, or OUCA, whose politics are entirely the politics of faction. Occasionally, in her account, ideas intervene: the main factions since the war have been variations on the "wets" and "dries," paternalist Tories or market liberals. But generally these are organizing principles for more serious matters: OUCA is the training ground for the backstabbing at the center of Tory party politics.

And indeed, in her political beginnings, and even in her ministerial career in the Heath government, Thatcher was a conventional Conservative hack, with a grating manner and precise mind. She was, even then, clearly in the "dry" faction, but she revered Macmillan at the time and she toed the line with Heath, even during his disastrous attempt at

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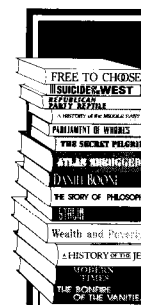
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Tory corporatism in the deadlocked mid-1970s. The only theme that remained from her early years, apart from her misogyny, was her philo-Semitism. It was an unusual characteristic for a Tory (her classical liberalism was showing again) and one that was strengthened by her eventual capture of the north London district of Finchley, which has a large and industrious Jewish population.

It was political office that transformed Thatcher. She is one of those politicians, like Truman, who shine only in power. And like Truman, she came to power by default. In 1975, in the Tory Party leadership election, she was a protest candidate to unseat Heath, who had just lost two elections in a row. As a woman, with limited cabinet experience, and with views that were suddenly veering far to the right of the Tory middle, she was given little or no chance of winning against Heath; but the Tory grandees mused that she might damage Heath enough to force him to quit. According to the rules of Tory leadership elections, if a "stalking horse" challenger can sufficiently weaken an incumbent in the first round, the incumbent usually retires and a second round is called. In this round, if everything goes according to plan, the heavyweights of the party enter the race, and the real contest begins. (This is how Thatcher herself was dispatched in 1990, when her first-round challenger, Michael Heseltine, bowed out in the second round in favor of a compromise candidate, John Major.)

In 1975, Thatcher's campaign manager, Airey Neave, smartly capitalized on the unlikelihood of Thatcher winning. He told many members privately and individually that she was likely to lose so badly that Heath would stay indefinitely. Before the secret ballot, Neave even managed to foment a panic that Heath was going to win big, and the Tories would be stuck with him for another five years. The panic produced an over-reaction. Many more voted for Thatcher than were intending to, for fear of re-electing Heath too handsomely. The result was that Thatcher actually beat Heath outright in the first round, 130 votes to 119. The old guard of the Tory Party had accidentally elected a rightist, lower-middle-class woman. In the second round she had too much momentum to be stopped.

Thatcher was an understandably nervous and occasionally mediocre leader of the opposition; and it seems clear that, if James Callaghan had called an election in the fall of 1978, before a disastrous winter of industrial strikes, he may well have won a narrow re-election. But he waited, and Thatcher battered on anti-union and anti-immigrant sentiment to win a memo-

table May 3 victory at the head of a reformist, but still wet-stacked cabinet.

The story of Thatcher's eleven-year struggle to reform the British economy is familiar. The prevailing criticisms—they are epitomized in Charles Dellheim's recent book, *The Disenchanted Isle: Mrs. Thatcher's Capitalist Revolution*—are largely sentimental: that she did not care enough about the victims of a capitalist shake-out. But at no point did Thatcher fully unravel the generous British welfare state, which protected the victims from profound hardship. There were no Gingrich-like reductions in welfare benefits, no welfare reform, no abolition of the National Health Service. There was merely a shake-out of inefficient industries that was not softened by loose fiscal policy, an attempt to bring some market mechanisms into universal health care, and a shift from income to sales taxes. And it is likely that less market-oriented policies would have created more victims in the long run.

In some ways, indeed, the economic debate about Thatcherism is over. Tony Blair, the current Labour Party leader, has all but conceded that Thatcher's market reforms worked. (He dines with Rupert Murdoch.) Britain's economy is more flexible, stable and productive than two decades ago; it has enjoyed more growth, lower inflation and lower unemployment than most of its European partners in the last decade. It was not a miracle, let alone a cure for Britain's economic problems; but it was about as effective a treatment as could be envisaged.

But what of Thatcher's nationalism? This, not her liberalism, is where the real story lies, because it was her nationalism that finally destroyed her career, and it is nationalism that is at the real center of Britain's political impasse. Thatcher's career may well be studied by historians less for its effect on markets and British institutions than for its deep and confused struggle with the meaning of sovereignty in the latter part of the twentieth century. Indeed, the only truly interesting section of *The Path to Power*, apart from Thatcher's memories of her early childhood, are the last few sections, where she makes her case, in her usual stark and honest terms, for the resilience and supremacy of the nation-state.

V.

Thatcher's case against the European Union is admirably clear. It goes something like this. The only democratic and effective models for political organization are nation-states. Without a common language and a common culture and a common history, there cannot be a nation, and without a nation, there

cannot be a state that is responsive to its citizens, a state that is effective in countering external threats. So the attempt to create a super-national body with real power over citizens of particular nation-states is to create a body that is inherently undemocratic, unwieldy and ineffective.

Thus, a European parliament is meaningless. The reason is simple: there is no European nation. Citizens of various countries cannot possibly feel connected to it in the way that they feel connected to their own member countries. Federalism may work in Germany or the United States, where different regions still speak a common language and partake in a common history; but it cannot work as a principle for countries as distinct as Ireland and Greece, Denmark and Spain. "The false political mission which some would set for the European Community is to turn it into a ... United States of Europe in which individual nations each with its living democracy would be subordinated within an artificial federal structure which is inherently bureaucratic," Thatcher lamented in Washington in 1991. "A Community lacking a common language can have no public opinion to which the bureaucrats are accountable."

As an international actor, moreover, such a super-national body would also almost always be paralyzed by its internal divisions and political incoherence. When it could agree, it would generally be about trivial matters. When issues of real consequence arose—such as the conquest of Bosnia—there would be nothing but indecision and appeasement. "When serious work has to be done," Thatcher asserts briskly in her book, "we all know that the U.S. can only rely upon a handful of nation states with a global outlook and a willingness to uphold international order. That means, principally, ourselves and the French; and the French ... have generally been suspicious of American-led ventures."

Rarely has the bare-bones reality of the Western international order been explained more succinctly. It is important to note, however, that Thatcher does not share the views of some American conservatives about the impossibility of an organized international order. She is a stickler for international law (she was horrified by the American invasion of Grenada), which she offered as her primary justification for retaking the Falkland Islands; and international law is still a central argument of hers for the defense of Bosnia. Nor is she viscerally averse to the United Nations. She believes, reasonably enough, that some well-established international bodies are beneficial to global order as long as they are not mistaken for substantive

actors in themselves. She is also a passionate supporter of the GATT. Even when facing down the evil bureaucrats of Brussels, she is merely prepared to "resolutely use all avenues of non-cooperation open to us *under the existing treaties*." (The emphasis is mine, though she is pretty emphatic.)

Thatcher manages to be a nationalist *and* an internationalist. It is a worldview in short supply; and it provides the theoretical underpinning of her hostility to what she derisively calls the "pooling of sovereignty" in European institutions. Her book is peppered, without self-awareness, with "we" and "us," by which she means the British. In her early negotiations with the EEC over Britain's budget share in the early 1980s, she infuriated the Foreign Office by insisting that she was not finessing a joint endeavor. She was getting "our money" back, as she delicately put it, and she harangued the Germans and the French until they gave it back to her. She never for a moment thought of Europe as something of which Britain was a part; it was always a congeries of nation states with which Britain had made a (not terribly good) deal. Her style of negotiation was relentlessly oppositional and darkly defensive. In her book she warmly quotes the British jurist Lord Denning in seeing the encroachment of European institutions in classically English maritime terms: "No longer is European law an incoming tide flowing up the estuaries of England. It is now like a tidal wave bringing down our sea walls and flowing inland over our fields and houses..."

She is Boadicea fighting off the Roman invaders. But her clarity begs some practical questions. What if Britain were actually cut off from the trading privileges of the continent, where two-thirds of British trade takes place, as would happen if Britain were really to withdraw from the EU? Well, British companies would be at a massive market disadvantage in competing for contracts in the core group's markets; a large amount of overseas investment in Britain, particularly from Japan, might very well dry up, since it is premised on using Britain as a cheap labor conduit to sell products in the vast European market; and the international markets—the ultimate arbiters of the limits of sovereignty—would in all likelihood greet British withdrawal from Europe by initiating a terrifying collapse of confidence. Much of Thatcher's economic achievement in resurrecting the British economy would be imperiled.

Thatcher's nationalism, in other words, would destroy her liberalism. Perhaps, as she wanly suggests, Britain could make up the difference by large

investments in non-EU countries and by expanding markets in Asia. But it would take a long time; and in any event it would be a perverse strategy while sitting a mere half hour away from one of the richest parts of the developed world. In office Thatcher recognized these realities, which is why she linked the pound to the Deutschmark and pushed for an even closer European market by 1992. In retirement, however, she has retreated to a romantic isolationism. In her speech on January 11, she lambasted her Disraelian Tory critics thus: "I am not sure what is meant by those who say that the party should return to something called 'One Nation Conservatism.' As far as I can tell by their views on European federalism, such people's creed would be better described as 'No Nation Conservatism.'"

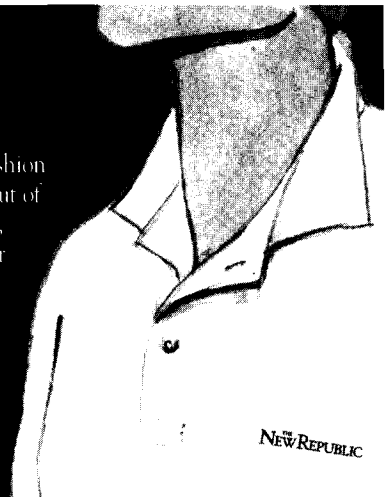
But is the choice really as facile as "one nation" or "no nation"? To what extent, in any case, does the nation, strictly speaking, exist today? British sovereignty, after all, is already diminished by the relative insignificance of Britain in the world system and its disproportionately trade-based economy. Britain had precious little sovereignty in 1976, when its entire budget was made subject to International Monetary Fund conditions; the country's economy, by virtue of its trading ties to Germany and massive invest-

ment in the United States, is highly sensitive to business cycles in both those countries. The Deutschmark dominates the pound in the European economy. During the cold war, Britain's ability to exercise a foreign policy independent of the United States was strictly circumscribed, as Anthony Eden first discovered in the Suez crisis, and as every successive British prime minister well understood. Even in the recent Balkan crisis, it is hard to see how Thatcher could have intervened militarily to defend Bosnia without the cooperation of the Americans or the French.

She also elides an interesting fact which Geoffrey Howe, her former chancellor of the exchequer and foreign secretary, recently noted. It is a little rich for the British to point out that the state is—and can only be—commensurate with the nation. For the British nation is itself a recent contraption, cobbled together from at least four different nations: the English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish. In recent years, moreover, a plethora of other immigrant nationalities and cultures have been added to the jumble. The differences between these peoples are real. If Thatcher believes geographic contiguity should determine the boundaries of political organization, she should relinquish Ulster; and if she believes nations

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should exercise enormous autonomy within broader political units, she should largely dismember the centralized United Kingdom. But in the British debates about such devolution, Thatcher is among the most dogged integrationists.

Thatcher is right about a lot of what has been constructed under the rubric of a united Europe: its bureaucratic unaccountability, its overly ambitious currency regulation. But the introduction of stable rules into markets is conducive to free trade, not inimical to it. And the difference between a European currency and a heavily coordinated currency system is a difference of degree, not of kind. If sound finance is the primary concern, then the record of the Bundesbank in this regard is a good deal better than the Bank of England's. The question, then, is not whether Britain's sovereignty is compromised or not, but how best to control the compromise of that sovereignty. Do you join in communal arrangements in which you have a voice, or opt out in bitter and increasingly powerless isolation? The question answers itself.

The saddest thing in Thatcher's book is her hope that the United States will rescue Britain from its plight and resurrect Britain's role as trans-Atlantic arbiter. Evidently she is still basking in the glow of those movie outings in Grantham in the

1930s and in the heady days when she acted as a mediator between Reagan and Gorbachev. The truth, however, is that the United States has no interest any longer in a particularly "special" relationship with Britain; and certainly not in a relationship "special" enough to prefer to a bond with a core group of European states, headed by Germany, or with the growing markets of China and Asia. Since the Gulf war—which was, in retrospect, the last gasp of an old world order rather than the herald of a new one—those moments when an Anglo-American bond might have emerged have proven disasters: Bosnia, where Britain and America were essentially at odds; or Ireland, where the Americans have stiffed the most conciliatory prime minister in decades.

The recognition of the end of the "special relationship" with America and the economic risks of isolation in Europe combined last summer to ensure that John Major survived as leader of the Tory Party. It was dawning that Major, for all his grayness and his inanity, was actually pursuing the most sensible course of action. He was committed to a European policy, but he was resisting attempts to water down Britain's less regulated markets or to force a common currency upon a continent before enough economic convergence

had taken place. It is hard to see what practical alternative his enemies were proposing. All they knew was that the future was getting closer; and there was little in the future to which they warmed.

Their most convincing argument was against the EU's anachronistic reliance on top-down, bureaucratic regulation as a means for political unification and economic growth. But this suggests not withdrawal, but a British role in the future of Europe that very few British politicians have sought to grasp. For the most natural and challenging role for Britain in the future is staring it in the face: the economic and political liberalization—the Americanization, if you will—of European institutions.

Such a liberalization would require a subtler approach to the EU. It would build on the single market initiative, which swept away many tariffs throughout the European continent. By staying in the EU but opting out of the social charter,

Britain could also increasingly destabilize the *dirigiste*, French-inspired attempts to regulate the continent's economy. Britain has already undercut continental labor costs, attracting foreign investment away from France and Germany, and provided a critical incentive for other European economies to deregulate and compete. Behind Alain Juppé's political courage lies John Major's economic *laissez faire*.

Emotionally and theoretically, such a strategy requires a leap that Thatcher cannot make. It is a leap that accepts the deeply compromised condition of British sovereignty, and concedes that Britain's participation in a European endeavor should be based on distinguishing between liberal federalism and Eurostatism. Institutions which can directly regulate, legislate and tax citizens of member countries should be resisted. Powers to determine the ends of national policies should be blocked or opposed. There should be no strengthening of the European parliament, the European commission, or a weakening of any nation-state's veto power over communal decisions. At the same time, however, those measures that merely determine the *means* by which Europeans interact—rules of trade, the rights of the citizen against the state or, indeed, the currency in which individuals trade—are a different matter. They create an atmosphere of cooperation. They determine the rules of play, but they do not determine who wins the game. They are the mechanisms of procedure, not results.

On these liberal principles, there is no reason not to join a common currency. As long as its soundness is determined by a politically independent body—a European version of the Bundesbank—such a currency could be a non-inflationary mechanism to facilitate simpler, quicker and freer trade across the continent. There is also no reason not to allow British courts ultimately to adhere to the rulings of the European Court, as long as all member countries are allowed to appoint justices to it. Independent central banks and independent judiciaries are both central to liberalism. At the moment, Britain has neither. By pursuing the project of a liberal, federal Europe, Britain could not only find a role, but solve a few of its own problems as well.

Liberalism as a political force has always been stronger in Britain than on the continent. The greatest liberal thinkers—Hobbes, Locke, Mill—were British. But they did not altogether lack brethren in Europe: Hegel, Humboldt, Constant and Tocqueville spring to mind. In the postwar period, there have been a sprinkling of classically liberal political lead-

The Application

coming at last to the
bureaucracy of being
office of what is
I bring the paper
to the chief of operations
who says it is not
correctly prepared
and sends me to the tenth room
on the fortieth floor
where I am to ask for
a mister noosebaum
who will give me permission
to resubmit my application
if I so desire
and if not I can go
to the twelfth room
on the twenty-seventh floor
and sign a document
that will absolve me of responsibility
for my original application
which was incorrectly prepared
and is now invalid
with no hope of being accepted
nothing else will be granted
unless I proceed
according to instructions

NORMAN STOCK

ers: Adenauer, Gonzalez, Thatcher. Britain's greatest gift to Europe is not its political gentility, but its tradition of political liberalism. If the British would understand this, then some English fire could still be blown onto the embers of the European project.

For the European project need not be the same as the dreary uniformity of a post-socialist behemoth. It may be a peculiarly British conception of a group of nation-states, bound together by an increasing nexus of liberal institutions: a common currency, an independent cen-

tral bank, a bill of European rights. This is not a United States of Europe; it is a contraption that defies Gallic uniformity or Teutonic coherence. It will not be brought into being without a steady dose of English pragmatism and *laissez faire*. But the British have first to believe in their own part in the adventure. They need to be given an idea of how their own patrimony could inform and improve the next generation of Europeans. Alas, the only postwar leader who could have given them such an idea is too blinded by nostalgia to make the case. •

Hoop Dreams

BY JOE KLEIN

Time Present, Time Past: A Memoir by Bill Bradley

(Knopf, 442 pp., \$26)

Bill Bradley is a tantalizer. He tempts us with glimpses of possibilities, with flashes of intelligence, with decency and the promise of straight talk—and we wait, and we wait, for him to deliver, to lead. But the moment never quite arrives. He always seems about to... He toys with it, he ruminates on it, he creates the impression that something *important* is going to happen soon. And then we wait some more.

He does it here again, in his account of life in the Senate. Rarely has a memoir so perfectly epitomized a political career. He opens with a preface that raises the possibility that this will be no ordinary political tract. It is 1992. He is doing what he has always done, as a basketball player and a politician: "a drive, a flight, a performance, a hotel, a sleep and a drive, a flight, a return," while keeping a journal, "jot[ting] down what I heard, saw, sensed and felt." The perfunctory, laundry-list quality of these musings is a set-up: Bradley has grown frustrated, bored with his public life. He is also in the midst of a personal crisis; everyone close to him is suffering. His wife has breast cancer. His father has gone blind; his mother has chronic emphysema. His secretary is diagnosed with ovarian cancer. "Two acquaintances died in plane crashes and one friend committed suicide." And he is traveling about on the stump—reluctantly, reflexively—in support of a younger and perhaps less worthy man, a fellow Rhodes Scholar, who, without much self-examination, has flung himself into a

presidential campaign (which, against all odds, he seems likely to win).

"I realized I was writing [in my notebooks] with more intensity than usual," Bradley observes. "Perhaps because it was a year of great pressures and decisions, I was more reflective than I'd been in other years of campaigning, seeing things on more levels. I felt an urge to declare myself—to get beyond the politician's pragmatic ambiguity to the clarity of the facts as I saw them." All right then! Let 'er rip, Bill. We're more than ready.

... Bill?

I want to be fair. Bill Bradley is an admirable man. He has been a powerful force for sanity in the Senate. He studies hard, takes nuanced and sophisticated positions. He has tackled thankless, sometimes nearly incomprehensible issues: Third World debt, western water rights. He gave us the tax reform of 1986, perhaps the best piece of fiscal legislation since 1913. He is not mean or petty; he resists the simplification and the sophistry that come with his territory. It would be difficult to imagine a less demagogic public figure.

Moreover, he wrote this book himself. It is admirably un-smooth. It lacks the sterile competence of ghosted political memoirs. There is a substantial human presence here, a genuine laconic sensibility. He enjoys telling stories about people he's met on the road. Some are memorable, such as Dorothy Bradley (no relation), who lost a gubernatorial race in Montana and then did contemplative penance by going to work as a

teacher's aide in a small country town. At times the senator's musings have a pleasant literary quality, as when he writes about his childhood in Crystal City, Missouri, next to the Mississippi River: "The river for Mark Twain symbolized freedom, defiance and rebellion.... For me, in an age shattered daily by sound bites and news on the hour... with continuity more difficult to find, the river and the bluffs above it came to represent permanence."

Note the wistfulness. It permeates the book. It is so strong, so persistent, that it becomes a constant reminder of the great unanswered—the barely asked—questions that Bradley has posed as politician and memoirist: Why am I so uncertain about what I want to do? Why have I not lived up to expectations? If I am perplexed and dissatisfied by public life, is it my fault or the crude quality of public life? And what now?

In short, Bradley has anticipated our disappointment—and still doesn't know what to do about it. He meanders about, searching. He evades the most basic political questions (he never does tell us what he thinks of Bill Clinton); he is maddeningly coy, moving toward intimacy, then backing off. He seems constitutionally inconclusive and at times surprisingly lazy. There are vast sections of this book that needn't have been written. He devotes a chapter to "The World's Greatest Deliberative Body"—the title is ironic, I assume—and mails in a series of unremarkable anecdotes about "colorful" colleagues. He forces us to endure dense accounts of uncompleted legislative battles on "worthy" but not exactly earth-shattering issues, such as mining and grazing rights.

Although he has now proclaimed his "independence," Bradley never quite explains his reasons for leaving the Democratic Party, a decision that seems positively mystifying given the traditional Democratic cast of this book. He covers all the usual interest groups. He is outraged by racism. He favors reparations for Native Americans. He goes to Appalachia (where he does offer some interesting reflections about his Scotch-Irish heritage). He is disturbed by the insecurities of the middle class. He is impressed by Rocky Mountain feminism. Some of his best friends are Hispanic.

Meanwhile the memoirist neglects one of his great strengths—foreign policy. Over the years, his grasp of national security and intelligence issues, especially regarding Russia, has been among the firmest in the Senate, but there is little of that here. More recent troubles, like the war in Bosnia, are barely mentioned. Worse, Bradley's treatment of

the issues that he has proclaimed his prime areas of interest—race, the dwindling sense of community in America—is so superficial as to pose a real threat to his reputation for “thoughtfulness.” Take race. Some of his best friends *are* black. His record of personal involvement is real. He has indeed spoken out on the subject, and he spends a paragraph admiring himself for it: “The best political minds had counseled me to talk about race only before a targeted (meaning black) audience ... to call America to a higher moral ground or to highlight black self-destruction risked alienating both races.”

And yet he has never quite achieved the outspokenness for which he congratulates himself, to say nothing of genuine analysis. Indeed, his views are depressingly orthodox, traditionally liberal, although he did pioneer (along with Clinton) the recent neo-“courageous” breakthrough of admitting that underclass sociopathy isn’t just an outlaw expression of victimhood. This admission furnishes him, and the president, with a significant rhetorical tool: he can posit black crime and white racism as twin evils to be eradicated (with the latter, of course, the “ultimate” evil). This would be forgivable, if it led to some creative thinking about these issues. It doesn’t.

Bradley will toss off a figure—“the median net worth for white households in 1991 was \$44,408. For black households, it was \$4,604”—and then offer an analysis—“The problem of the poor is inadequate economic growth unfairly shared.” But he does not acknowledge that much of the disparity is caused by the disproportionate number of black single-parent households (or that the incomes of *intact* black families are closing in on those of comparable white ones). He seems to believe that the roots of underclass poverty are a consequence of economic policy and racial discrimination; and so he barely mentions the self-destructive behavior patterns of the poor. Nor does he acknowledge arguments, made by such friends as Daniel Patrick Moynihan, that the fundamental

nature of poverty began to change in the 1960s, when the welfare caseload (and crime) soared while the unemployment rate, even for African Americans, remained low.

Indeed, Bradley offers few answers or explanations here, no new ideas, not even an elaboration of the modest pilot projects—some of them quite interesting—that he has proposed in his speeches. He does praise admirable individuals, such as a Newark minister named William Watley, and he thinks that we should find a better way to sup-

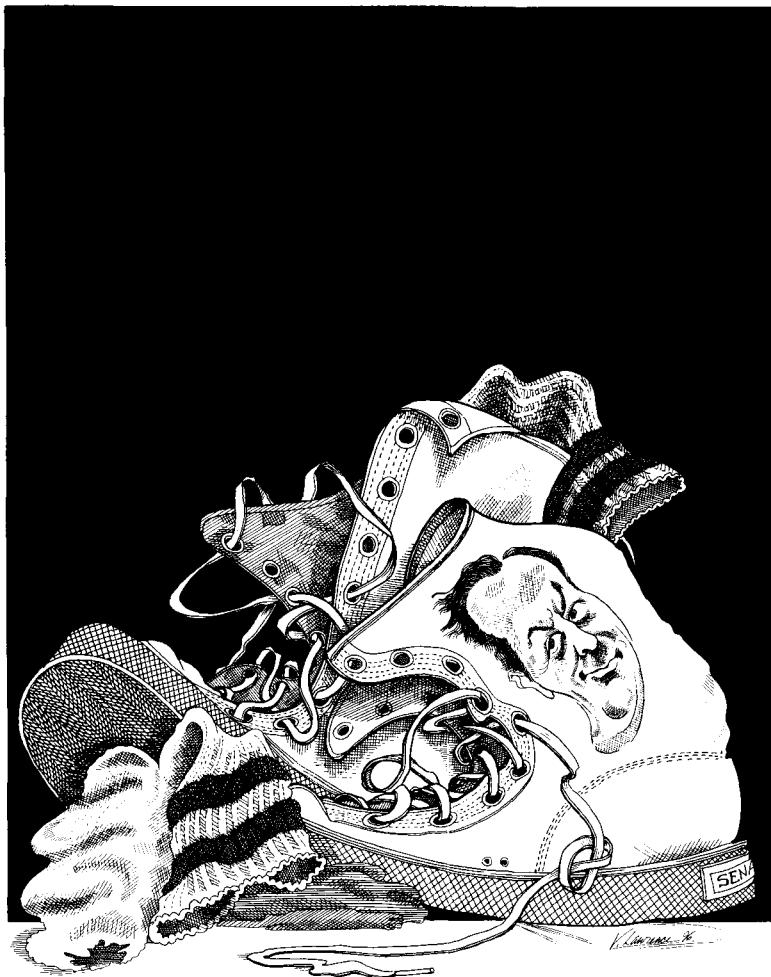
eral Luddism (though he remains, happily, a staunch free trader and globalist). But he seems to take anecdotes and the most simplistic—pessimistic—polling data as gospel. He ignores the statistical evidence that the standard of living has been increasing for most workers, though at a slower rate than during the postwar boom, and ignores also more sophisticated polling data showing that people are no more concerned about *their own* job security than they were fifteen years ago, before “downsizing” was neologized.

OK, he’s a politician. His job is to respond to pressing public concerns, and his prescriptions here are unexceptionable: a demand for more corporate responsibility, for more and better transitional aid to displaced workers. But Bradley presents himself as a “thoughtful” politician, the sort of fellow who might be expected to think his way past the superficialities of the moment and ruminate on what *really* is causing such a phenomenally successful country to seem so febrile, so uncertain, so dispirited.

This is beyond disappointing. It’s also mystifying. Bradley appears to be suffering from a sort of Intention Deficit Disorder. He knows what he wants to do, and he knows what everyone expects him to do, but he can’t pull the switch. A part of the problem is that he’s a stone Calvinist: he seems mortally embarrassed by his own ego. Passions are roiling and burbling down below, the need to perform

and the need to be loved, but he plays politics the way he played basketball—clinically, not emotionally. He distrusts virtuosity; he is not a playground kind of guy. And he is candid about this. He doesn’t pretend to be anything other than an awful public speaker. He quotes, at length, a damning (and also flattering) account of his keynote stinkeroo at the 1992 Democratic Convention by Michael Lewis (which appeared in this magazine), which concludes: “He is cursed ... by his virtue.”

Is he? Bradley certainly would love to have us believe it. He complains endlessly, *thoughtfully*, about the game



BILL BRADLEY BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

port such people, but he provides no proposals on how to do so. He seems blissfully adrift from the cutting-edge social policy arguments, like the proposal by his colleague Senator Dan Coats, Republican of Indiana, to actually move federal funds from the welfare bureaucracy to inspired altruists such as Reverend Watley.

Bradley’s account of his other great passion, the alleged waning of middle-class economic security, is equally perfunctory. He tells moving anecdotes about displaced middle managers; and he seems to have been infected with a mild case of the prevailing lib-

of politics. Here he is, describing campaign debates: "They provide only a glimpse of the human being who is the candidate. They reward glibness, aggressiveness and attractive physical appearance. To do exceptionally well requires spontaneity, but that means taking risks. Few politicians take risks." Several pages later, in one of his rare comments about Bill Clinton, Bradley faults his performance in a presidential debate: "I thought he lacked spontaneity and passion." This is weird. I mean, Clinton was pretty stiff in the first debate, the one Bradley was describing, but he won a place in the empathy hall of fame—and, I suspect, the presidency—in the next debate, when he read a live audience's questions far more spontaneously and far more passionately than George Bush or Ross Perot. It has often been argued, of course, that Clinton's great flaw is an excess of "spontaneity and passion," an inability to make distinctions among contending needs. But Bradley's assertion about Clinton hangs there, incomplete, unexamined, and then, just a few pages later, he muses: "For me, leadership is tied to self-knowledge. The examined life has become one of my ideals."

Good for him. But Bradley can't quite figure out why *he* is ambivalent about seeking the presidency: "Was I a public or a private person? Could I integrate my deep desire for privacy with the urgency of my commitment to serve? Even to admit such hesitations publicly would be to disqualify myself in the minds of some people." Would it? Or have we reached the point where public rumination on the brutality and the craziness of the political process—and an effort to campaign in a genuinely thoughtful, genuinely humane way—would make the candidate more attractive? Bradley obviously thinks not.

He is no romantic. He is not one of those who thinks of Henry V at Agincourt when he prepares for campaign battle; he expects the Marne. "A political campaign . . . can be very cruel. The object is to turn your opponent's strength into weakness—to take what he views as his finest moment and then to attack it and demean it." As an illustration, he recalls the disgraceful Senate campaign that Dan Quayle ran against Birch Bayh in 1980. Bayh's wife was battling cancer and he missed votes to be at her side. Quayle attacked him for absenteeism; and Bradley's disgust is palpable. But his boredom with his political life, and his exhaustion, are also palpable: "Each week I get fifteen hundred letters, four hundred speaking requests, and twenty-three hundred phone calls. I work about

fourteen hours a day, every day. . . ." Which doesn't leave much room for reflection or recreation, for being a father or a husband.

And so it seems logical that he would quit (or at least take a break from) public life. But why the diffidence, the coy ballet, the tease about an independent campaign for the presidency, the flirtation with—and the withdrawal from—the dour Gang of Eight (Tsongas, Weicker, Hart et al) and the formation of a Third Force? A cynic might conclude that the reason for the courtship ritual is commerce, that Bradley is taking a page, as it were, from Colin Powell's method of selling books. (Even Mario Cuomo recently announced that he was leaving the "door open" to a candidacy as his publication date approached. Nobody noticed.)

But that's not Bradley's way. No, he seems tortured by expectations—his own and ours. "Americans," he writes, "often attribute qualities to successful athletes that are unrelated to athletic performance." People have assumed that he was preparing a presidential run from the moment he entered politics, and even before: his teammates on the Knicks not only called him "Dollar Bill," but also "Mr. President." He doesn't resent these expectations; he plays at, and with, them. He spent much of the 1980s, he admits, raising money—and making fund-raising connections—for an expected national campaign. But the time has to be right. And the time is never quite right. You make your own time, as Bill Clinton—the great unacknowledged presence in this book—proved in 1992.

One does wonder what Bradley makes of Clinton. Disdain? Maybe; it is in the literary body language, in the flirtation with "independence." But why? The two men agree—they are carbon copies of each other—on most issues. (In Los Angeles, a few weeks ago, Bradley gave another thoughtful, no-holds-barred speech about race in which he ended up agreeing completely with the president on affirmative action.) Clinton is certainly no less intelligent than Bradley. And how fair would it be for the senator from New Jersey to consider the former governor of Arkansas indecisive or feckless, when Bradley himself has so much trouble reaching even the threshold of a candidacy? Moreover, anyone who watched Bradley shuck and duck a simple position on Jim Florio's tax increases during his last Senate campaign can only wonder how much more principled a Bradley presidency would be than the current administration.

Still, Clinton's uncluttered ambition

does seem crude compared to Bradley's ruminative, tormented aloofness. Bradley is very much the son of a small-town banker; and Clinton, well, you've heard the gory details. But there is more. Bradley lacks the kinetic quality of leadership that flows from the commingling of talent and deprivation. The metaphor that comes to mind is, unfortunately, his basketball career. He was a splendid college player, and there was the expectation that he would be a transcendent pro. Yet he turned out to be something less: steady, dependable (indeed, predictable: twenty years later I can remember the half dozen or so spots on the court from which he'd shoot). He was a valued part of one of the smartest and most aesthetically pleasing teams in memory. But he was not a leader. The leaders of the Knicks were Walt Frazier and Willis Reed, the ghetto geniuses, and Dave DeBusschere, the Detroit tavern owner's son. It wasn't just a matter of physical skill, though that was certainly part of it. They played with an abandon, a hunger, a freedom, that Bradley lacked. Larry Bird, who came later, and was every bit as slow and Caucasian as "Dollar Bill," also had the poor boy's creative compulsion to reinvent the limits of the possible.

Bill Clinton has it, too. He has been a disappointment as president, and in some ways a disgrace. But it is one of the unexpected curiosities of this book that Clinton's hunger for love and achievement, his willingness to risk all to gain the prize, begins to seem more admirable. And Bradley's halting, almost fey, political sensibility seems a maddening liability. There is the vaguest hint of Henry Adams—who never played for the Knicks—staring across Lafayette Square at the White House, fascinated and horrified, as a succession of uncultivated, disappointing men seize their moment.

A bounding, almost loutish informality does seem to be a distinctive American quality of leadership. We smile a lot. We like spunk. We need the appearance of confidence, the spectacle of optimism. We don't trust brooders. Bill Bradley may be spunky, confident and optimistic, but he conveys something more tender, more tentative. It is good that he loaned his civility and his decency to public life for a time. He played as well for us as he did for the Knicks. But what he seems to have done here, in this sad and uncomfortable book, is come to the very edge of the realization that he can go no further.

JOE KLEIN is a *Newsweek* columnist and CBS News political analyst.

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Sweet deals

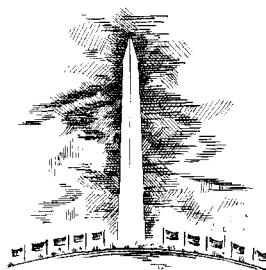
THE LAMENT THESE DAYS IN Washington is that civility is dead, that mean-spiritedness has replaced large-spiritedness as the local way of being. I have a hard time thinking that the buzz of invective on Capitol Hill signals the breakdown of the Republic (have any of the crusaders for kindness ever watched the Betty Boothroyd show on C-SPAN?), and when was it, exactly, that large-spiritedness was the order of the day? Apparently, some members of Congress are so disheartened by the petty and bitter atmosphere that they can't go on. The latest quitter is the gentle man from Maine, Senator William Cohen, the Republican moderate and poet, a tender plant in an increasingly rocky garden. "By his own account," reported *The New York Times*, "the polarizing political mood on Capitol Hill was a significant factor in his choice to leave." So, what will the disgusted centrist do now? Something lofty, one supposes. Another book, perhaps a potboiler about the decline of public discourse? Soothing and erudite poetry readings on NPR? Well, no. "... I'm still young, and I want to engage in the international field in an intense way," he said, referring to what the *Times* glossed as "the economic need and personal satisfaction he found in creating job opportunities rooted in the global economy." I guess it's uncivil of me to put my own, simpler spin on Cohen's explanation: he wants to rake it in while he still can. The senator probably won't be creating jobs worldwide by, say, building roads to help Guatemalan women get their goods to market or by returning to Malaysia, where he has already drummed up business for his constituents, to counsel rural proto-capitalists. What Cohen is doing is what was once called moving into the private sector. It is the senator's semantic good luck that, in a global economy, "the private sector" has lost its pinched quality. International business can look like a type of national service. But making a better world is not the same thing as making a better deal. It cheapens genuine public service—which, unlike the superficially pleasant world of client lunches and corporate retreats, is full of outright crabbiness and contention—to glide over the differences and then complain about bad manners in the Sen-

ate. "I'm 55, and I'm too moderate to get much farther in the Republican Party. I might as well go make some money." Was that truth too awful to tell? I'd rather have honesty from the gentleman from Maine than "thoughtfulness" or "civility."

RON BROWN WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY disagree with the distinction between a better world and a better deal. After all, he was one of the forces behind the Clinton administration's decision to continue the policy of subordinating human rights to corporate profit in China, indeed to promote this policy into the theory of "commercial engagement." But neither Brown nor that policy is shining right now. The Secretary of Commerce's personal approach to commerce is still under investigation. Once one of the most ubiquitous figures in America, he has all but disappeared. China is still a disastrous place for dissidents. From the Brownian perspective, continuing human rights abuses can always be explained away as painful evidence that marketization hasn't taken hold just yet, that its liberating power isn't quite ready to burst forth. One recent newspaper story pointed to an explosion of pirated American videos as evidence that deep changes were taking place in China. Who needs free speech when you've got *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*? But the government has managed to unlink markets from freedom and openness in the most direct way. Last week, Chinese officials decided to restrict the economic news that wire services like Dow Jones and Reuters bring to the country. Those who still believe in the universal applicability of the open markets, open minds equation were shocked. A Dow Jones official in China said, as if lecturing a bewilderingly dense child, "The open flow of economic information is good for China.... Abundant information makes markets stable." A Hong Kong politician agreed: "I am afraid this latest move will only send the signal that Chinese leaders still do not understand how the freedom of information underpins economic success." These free-market acolytes are right about economics, but they are probably wrong to assume that Chinese officials care. A misshapen market might suit their needs just fine. It might even boost the government's own economic success: the state-funded New China News Agency will probably earn a bundle after it corners the market on the newly regulated financial information and makes users and providers pay

for it. After a decade of celebrating the spread of democratic capitalism, we are now seeing the spread of undemocratic capitalism.

IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT CAN redeem the honor of capitalism, it is charity. It, I would like to think, is one aspect of American society untouched by market-minded calculations of self-interest. But a recent front-page story in *The Wall Street Journal* made it clear that public spiritedness, too, has a price. In Atlanta, people who give blood are no longer rewarded with Nutter Butter cookies. A blood-drive organizer admitted that many donors "just



come to donate and get the Nutter Butters. It's the one time of the year that they eat a Nutter Butter." The Red Cross happily dispenses Keebler cookies (which the company happily provides for free); but a Nutter Butter is a Nutter Butter. One hard-core donor approaching his

ten-gallon mark declared the cookie swap "a downgrade." At last, honesty in public service. The Nutter-Butter bleeders aren't trying to dress up their displeasure with commentary about the decline of phlebotomists' technique or their desire to make a contribution elsewhere: it's the cookies, stupid. I give blood, and I eat Nutter Butters so I side with the disgruntled. (Full disclosure: I have been bought off with a handful of oatmeal cookies.)

CALL IT THE NUTTER-BUTTER principle: goodness can be bought; sometimes it *must* be bought. The relationship isn't straightforward: people don't volunteer because they want merchandise, but they want merchandise if they volunteer; and the dollar value of rewards for good works is usually pretty low. But there's a market for charity. In fact, it seems to be the only market that the market-fundamentalists in America don't acknowledge. Eliminate the charitable deduction? Not in a capitalist culture. Yes, I know, virtue is its own reward. But this platitude behind which the flat-taxers like to hide makes generosity seem like a personal taste—like a taste for Fabergé eggs. If people are really so market-manipulated, keep the cash value on charity. The better souls among us don't need it. The rest of us do. Public spiritedness needs to be rewarded—there's nothing wrong with that. There is something wrong with pursuing reward and calling it public spiritedness.

JENNIFER BRADLEY

Inspiring Future Scientists



Lydia Cheng watches as Dr. Laurie Gage takes a sample of stomach contents from a dolphin at Marine World Africa USA in Vallejo, California.

Real Science! Draws Teens to Careers

Imagine your kids switching channels to watch a teen reporter petting a pregnant dolphin, hunting dinosaur tracks in Utah or blasting off for Mars via virtual reality.

It could happen, thanks to a new public television program, *Real Science!* Created by KTEH-TV in San Jose, with support from Hitachi, this fast-paced series features teen reporters visiting with scientists to find out what they do, why they enjoy it, and what teenagers can do to prepare themselves for similar careers.

Real Science! was developed to

change American teens' attitudes towards the sciences. Statistics reveal a striking drop in interest in science by the time students reach the seventh grade. Equally alarming, American teens rank behind teens in other countries in scientific proficiency.

Hitachi is helping to reverse this trend by donating use of its TV facilities and committing \$90,000 to produce and distribute *Real Science!* Four episodes are currently airing on public television and in schools, and 13 more are planned for the fall.

The show's producer, Maura Daly Phinney of San Jose public television station, KTEH, says *Real Science!* has one overriding

goal: "We want the program to encourage students to pursue careers in science."

Hosted by California's 1994 Young Woman of the Year, Lydia Cheng, the series appeals to young people ages 8 to 18. Each 30-minute episode includes segments on three different science careers. Viewers accompany teenagers as they visit scientists, who demonstrate and explain their day-to-day work.

Supporting *Real Science!* is just one way Hitachi fulfills its social commitments. "We want to enrich the lives of young people by giving them fuel for their dreams," said Fred Hansen, executive vice president of Hitachi Data Systems. "Society's future rides on the hopes of today's youth, and we owe them an opportunity to create rewarding careers and fulfilling lives."



Maura Daly Phinney, producer of the *Real Science!* series.

Hitachi's outreach efforts include direct funding of projects like *Real Science!*, as well as donations and employee volunteerism for a host of national, regional and community-based projects. These activities benefit education, the arts, the environment, health care and social services.

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